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# JazzTimes

AMERICA'S JAZZ MAGAZINE

## Remembering Billie

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
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VICTOR WOOTEN





One of the greatest sax players of all time wanders the streets, homeless. A famous jazz drummer freezes because he can't afford to pay his heating bill. A world-reknowned bassist is deathly ill and doesn't have the money to see a doctor. Tragic stories, but unfortunately all too common. And all too unfair. Many of our finest jazz musicians, men and women who have helped create America's greatest contribution to world culture, are ending their lives penniless. And while their music has made fortunes for others, they can't even afford health insurance. This is why a group of concerned jazz musicians, fans, and the Jazz Foundation of America have founded the Jazz Musician's Emergency Fund. It's the first and only organization of its kind. Dedicated to giving something back to those deserving artists who have given us so much.

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## features

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The subject of recent biographies and boxed sets, *Lady Day* continues to fascinate jazz fans. Bret Primack discusses her art and impact with numerous musicians who've fallen under her spell.

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Having survived a heart attack, the veteran jazz crusader tells Patricia Myers that he's more dedicated to creating music—and more upset with industry trends—than ever.

## 38 Chornett Moffett

Playing it safe is of little interest to Moffett, as anyone who checked out his latest album, *Planet Home*, will soon discover. Willard Jenkins gets the low-down on the new project.

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## 46 Benny Carter

Though he's a man of few words, especially when it comes to self-promotion, Carter's wit and charm shines through in conversation with Josef Woodard.

## 68 Jammin' at NAMM

Josef Woodard surveys the Winter Expo.

## Our Pleasure

**T**hank you for the cover article on McCoy Tyner by Bret Primack (Feb. '96). I thoroughly enjoyed reading the story of his beginnings in music, and his insightful comments on jazz music and the giants he's shared the stage with. For over 30 years McCoy has been the premiere pianist in jazz. He was a key part of the classic Coltrane Quartet, and then went on to compose and play some of the most beautiful, imaginative and challenging music ever heard. McCoy was exploring "world music" long before anyone coined the term. Very few artists have ever excelled in so many different areas of an art form. He's blessed us with great solo, trio, quartet, ensemble and big band recordings. If I had to go on a desert island with the collective works of just one artist at my disposal, there's no doubt in my mind that the label on the box would say: "McCoy Tyner—The Best of All Forms." Thank you again.

Louis J. Perillo, M.D.  
Pensacola, FL

## Heart and Soul

**T**he Gateway Trio interview by Chip Stern (Dec. '95) was by far one of the most refreshing I have ever come by. An oasis from the thick jungle of intellectual jargon that generally permeates an interview, how beautiful to read their connectedness versus hearing how it affects their music. True music from the heart, from the soul.

Erica Johnson  
Kingston, NY  
WolfClan@eworld.com

## Critic Critiqued

**R**euben Jackson's account (Feb. '96) of the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Competition misconstrues both the mission of the institute and the rationale underlying the public context



of its award process. He persists in judging the occasion from the perspective of the critic assessing a performance by seasoned professionals, reserving nearly all of his positive observations for an all-star ensemble and the spoken addresses of several luminaries. Especially unfair was his holding it up as a yardstick against a half-dozen young string instrument competitors in trio formats the explosive set by a Clark Terry-led septet, which combo added up to a collective three-and-a-half centuries of experience. Is it any wonder that they nearly blew the Kennedy Center's roof off?

Having observed the preliminaries the day before and been much impressed, and notwithstanding my own disagreement with some of the final award decisions, I thought that the six prize winners acquitted themselves with considerable distinction and were anything but, in Mr. Jackson's words, "inconsistent" and "never...beyond a kind of promising competence."

Had Mr. Jackson taken the time to peruse the concert's program he would have come across in its initial pages succinct expressions of that purpose, to wit, "to ensure a steady infusion of fresh talent and new ideas into our thriving musical arts" (President Bill Clinton), and "to offer young artists the opportunity to develop and showcase their skills" (Tom Carter, the institute's president). That's what that evening in November was about, not how well

"evolution...play(s)...in packed concert halls."

W. Royal Stokes  
Silver Spring, MD

## Reuben Jackson responds:

I am a little baffled with Royal Stokes' critique of my Thelonious Monk Competition review. Contrary to what you might believe, Royal, I am well aware of the Institute's mission, and find said mission laudable.

But I believe the job of a performance reviewer is to assess the value of the artistic efforts in front of him or her, and not subject those opinions to an aesthetic "curve" based upon an organization's institutional edicts.

Perhaps the solution would be to eliminate any critical evaluation of future Institute competitions, because it seems to me an article concerning the Institute's goals is another piece entirely.

As to the praise I heaped upon the performance by Clark Terry and Company, again consider that I was offering my opinion of the musical efforts as a whole, and I found the aforementioned to have been the most artistically successful.

## Query

**I** am an independent filmmaker who is in production on a documentary about the musicians of Los Angeles' Central Avenue in the 1940s. Visuals of this important period in jazz history are few and I am seeking assistance in locating any exterior photos or film of Central Avenue during the years of 1940-1950.

All materials will be returned and the source will be credited in the film. Anyone with relevant material or information please contact: Jan 580 Productions, P.O. Box 458, Lake Forest, CA 92630 (714) 768-0655.

Jan D. Arnold  
Laguna Hills, CA

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**Duke Ellington.** *The Great American Concert.* I Can't Get Started. I'm Glad You're Here. The Song Is You. Night and Day. We're Inevitably In Love. 15 songs. #166485

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**INGO CHERRY and Some Jazz Friends.** *From Street Blues to Me.* I'm Glad You're Here. The Song Is You. Night and Day. What Is There to Love. 15 songs. #166483

**BILLIE HOLIDAY.** *The Duke Recordings.* Vol. 1. Lover Man. I'm Glad You're Here. The Song Is You. Night and Day. We're Inevitably In Love. 15 songs. #166482

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**ARTURO SANDOVAL.** *Dance of the Sun.* Congo (Africa). Africa. Gumbo. High. The Polaris. Gumbo. Samba. Conquistador. Gumbo. Congo. Gumbo. 15 songs. #166471

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**JOHN LARSEN.** *Live at the Apollo.* 15 songs. I'm Glad You're Here. The Song Is You. Night and Day. We're Inevitably In Love. 15 songs. #166469

**DAVID BENNETT.** *Waiting for Spring.* After the Snow Falls. Cast Your Fate to the Wind. My Romance. Private. Secret Love. I'm Glad You're Here. The Song Is You. Night and Day. We're Inevitably In Love. 15 songs. #166468

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One of the greatest thrills for us at *JT* is to present the work of great photographers like William Gottlieb, William Claxton, Francis Wolff, Lee Tanner and many others. Some of the most powerful images we've run have come from the camera and eye of Herman Leonard, whose stunning portrait of Billie Holiday graces this issue's cover.

That particular photo was originally taken by Herman in 1949 as part of a session for *Ebony* magazine, celebrating Holiday's release from jail and her subsequent "comeback." Herman remembers that day nearly 50 years ago almost as if were yesterday. "Billie was always a wonderful subject no matter what she was going through at

the time. She was willing to do anything to get the photograph we needed." On that day Herman photographed her not only at her home, but also at a club where she sang unaccompanied while he tried to capture her magnificence. The setting may have been staged, but her solo performance wasn't. Herman chuckles and sighs as he recalls his great fortune to be her audience of one on that day.

The photography on page 28 was another matter entirely. Hired by Norman Granz in 1955 to shoot her for an album cover, Herman recalls that when he arrived he found Billie's condition and appearance terrible. "I was devastated. I pulled Norman aside and said, 'Look, I can't shoot this, there's no way we can use any of this for the cover of album.' Norman shot back, 'Get your ass back out there and shoot her—it may be your last chance.' So, I did."

Herman confirms that there are lots of pictures of Holiday (and other

jazz greats) which he refuses to print or show in public simply because they show the artist in a deteriorated physical condition. "It just doesn't seem right to me."

Like most of us, Herman finds it difficult to compare Holiday with anyone. "I was lucky enough to have photographed Ella, Sarah and Billie, each of whom had their own special quality. Sarah had an incomparable vocal instrument, while Ella overflowed with swing and joy. But the way that Billie somehow channeled all of the suffering in her life separated her from all the rest and always will. Like Edith Piaf, Billie evoked pathos like no one else since."

Many of the artists interviewed by Bret Primack for the cover story agreed with Herman's sentiments. There was only one Billie Holiday. We only hope this issue helps you to get to know the real Billie a little better.

—Lee Mergner

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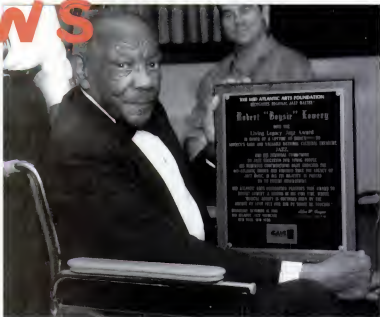
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# Jazz News

## AWARDS AND HONORS

trumpeter and band-leader Robert "Boysie" Lowery has received the 1995 Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation's Living Legacy Jazz Award. Born in Kingston, North Carolina, Lowery moved to Wilmington, DE in the 1940's, where he formed the Aces Of Rhythm and began an extraordinary career as a jazz educator. During the past 50 years, he has taught countless students, the most notable being Clifford Brown. By the way, the Foundation is still accepting applications for the 1996-97 Living Legacy Jazz Award. Honoring "living resident jazz masters who have contributed to the development and perpetuation of the jazz legacy in the mid-Atlantic region," the award bestows \$2,500 and a year-long commitment of recognition by the agency. The deadline is May 31. (410) 539-6656.

The International Dues Band recently honored trombonist, composer and educator Phil Wilson at Berklee College of Music in Boston. Wilson has been a Berklee faculty member since 1965. Proceeds from the concert established the Phil Wilson Endowed Scholarship Award.



Robert "Boysie" Lowery receives the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation Living Legacy Jazz Award.

"A Tribute To King Oliver" will be staged July 25 at the John Mercer Theater in Savannah, GA, as part of the 1996 Olympics. The concert, tracing the evolution of the jazz trumpet, will feature trumpeters Jon Fadklis, Clark Terry, Doc Cheatham

and Nicholas Payton. Also scheduled to perform are James Moody, Ben Riley and other Savannah natives. The "rebirth" of Oliver's "Savannah Syncopators" will be part of the festivities. Oliver, incidentally, died in Savannah in 1938.

## I N D U S T R Y

MT, the one-time enterprising indie label, which was purchased by Polygram over a year ago, has been shut down. According to a report in *Billboard*, Stefan Winter, who formerly headed the label, cited creative differences and commercial pressures as the reason for Polygram's decision. The JMT roster includes Robin Eubanks, Gary

Thomas, Marc Johnson and Tim Berne.

The Recording Industry of America reports that its Jazz Committee has been "revitalized." The committee, which comprises the heads of the jazz divisions from the six major labels, will meet monthly in an effort to promote jazz. On the agenda: the founding of a "Jazz Music Hall Of Fame."

Denon has announced the formation of Denon Active Media, which will develop, license and market music, CD-ROM games, recordable CD and digital software for worldwide distribution. DAM will also oversee all activities associated with the established Denon and Savoy Jazz music labels, including signing, recording and marketing new artists throughout North America.

Hired Gun Marketing and the German distributor EFA Medien GmbH have launched Escapade music, a joint venture label specializing in jazz "with an edge." The label's first release, due out now, is saxophonist Bill Evans' *Escape*. A new recording by Brand X is also on tap. Escapade plans to issue approximately six albums a year.

# IAJE in Southern Comfort

**P**receded by blizzards which crippled much of the Northeast, the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE) conference came off in January with nary a hitch thanks in no small part to a southern location (Atlanta) and superb special event planning. A record number of over 4,500 educators, students, musicians and industry professionals gathered at the Marriott Marquis in Atlanta for performances, clinics, work shops and exhibits geared to the burgeoning field of jazz education.

This year's conference was dedicated to the memory of Dizzy Gillespie, whose gifts as a mentor and musician were frequently cited by clinicians and performers throughout the show. He was even conjured up musically through a concert of a Lalo Schiffrin suite, performed by the composer himself, along with Dizzy as-

sociates Jon Faddis, Paquito D'Rivera, Ignacio Berroa and Rufus Reid, accompanied by the remarkably poised and professional Clark University band.

Like Dizzy himself, the IAJE conference is a combination of the serious and playful, with much of the serious learning taking place in the 30+ clinics, panels and workshops. One of my favorites was a clinic presented by vocalist Roscanna Vitro and a trio (including pianist Fred Hersch), "Musicians Are From Mars, Vocalists Are From Venus," effectively designed to broach the differences between singers and their accompanists. Vitro's outline of do's and don'ts should be required reading for both singers and players at all levels.

One panel presented in cooperation with NARAS featuring jazz veterans Horace Silver, Phil Woods, Charlie Haden, Randy Brecker and Patrick Williams managed to be serious and playful in one setting, as the players reminisced and offered nuggets of wisdom to an audience of mostly educators. When asked about the

"perfect jazz club," Woods followed Haden's dismissal of the club setting with his own admonition, "Yea, but sometimes it's groovy to play in a toilet!"

Living legends Tommy Flanagan, Benny Golson and J.J. Johnson were honored by the NEA as recipients of this year's Jazz Masters Award (see photo).

Mirroring the growth in concert sponsors elsewhere, performances sponsored by GRP/Impulse! and Warner Bros. presented a few acts, who perhaps might never have made it otherwise. The Impulse! concert closed out the conference on Saturday with exciting performances to a capacity crowd by Black Note, Diana Krall and Chick Corea, who showcased his new/old acoustic band with Bob Berg, John Patitucci and Gary Novak. The Warner Bros. show with Kenny Garrett, Larry Goldings and Wallace Roney was similarly outstanding. The brawny and brainy set by Garrett's trio with Jeff "Tain" Watts and Nat Reeves proved to be the unexpected crowd pleaser.

An earlier performance by Blue Note vocalist Kurt Elling and his working band got people talking about the importance of being both entertaining and creative. Other performing highlights included James Williams' Intensive Care Unit, Jane Ira Bloom, Fred Hersch, Hal Galper, Stanley Turrentine and Deborah Brown. Throughout the exhibit hall and the

hallways, the buzz of the conference concerned the debut of the online service Jazz Central Station, which includes an education module in conjunction with IAJE. Even the techno-phobic Phil Woods during one panel called JCS a possible savior to artists like himself whose CDs have traditionally been hard to find in stores.

Computer-friendly products like Woods' instructional CD-ROM and other instructional software were ubiquitous reminders of the effect of new technologies on the modern classroom.

And did I mention the school big bands, performing seemingly round-the-clock in the lobby? Although the listening experience became quickly tiresome to jaded industry folks, seeing the kids excitedly tote their instruments around, set up and perform as if they were booked at Carnegie Hall, made us all appreciate just how intoxicating this music can be. And that would make Dizzy smile.

—Lee Mergner

## CLUBS & CONCERTS

**T**he Les Paul Trio is now performing Monday nights at the Iridium in Manhattan. Stanley Turrentine plays the club March 12-17. The Pat Martino Quartet follows March 19-24.

**P**hil Woods collaborates with the Benny Carter Quartet at Boston's Regattabar, March 14-16.

**F**ace The Music and Dance, which teams jazz musicians and modern dance at Sym-



J.J. Johnson accepts an NEA Jazz Master Award at the IAJE conference in Atlanta.

phony Space in Manhattan, will present Hamiett Bluiett & the Bluiett 3 with the Pascual Rioult Dance Theatre April 18. (212) 864-1414.

Details have yet to be announced, but we like the sound of it: *Carnegie Hall Celebrates the Music of Ella Fitzgerald*. It's two nights in July and a sequel of sorts to Carnegie's recent Sinatra 80th birthday bash. As for the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band, here's what's on tap for the 1996-97 season: *Bird and Monk at the Movies*, 10/17/96; *Gershwin—A Portrait In Jazz*, 1/23/97; *Carnegie Hall Family Concert*, 1/25/97; *An Evening Of Brazilian Music*, 3/6/97 and

*My Favorite Things—A Tribute To Richard Rodgers*, 5/1/97.

On April 14, saxophonist Richard Elliot and guitarist Craig Chaquico will kick off another season of jazz performances at Thornton Winery in Temecula, CA. (619) 535-0044.

Dave Brubeck will debut his musical settings for the poetry of Wendell Berry at Cary Hall in Lexington, MA, on June 1. (617) 862-7186.

Special EFX plays the Glenora Wine Cellars in Dundee, NY July 16, followed by Nelson Rangell, Aug. 20. (800) 836-1691.

## NEW RELEASES

Just about the time this issue hits the newsstands, Columbia will release the much awaited (and delayed) six-CD boxed set, *The Complete Columbia Recordings of Miles Davis and Gil Evans*.

ECM has new discs out by Dave Holland (*Dream of the Elders*) and Ralph Towner (*Lost and Found*).

Columbia's Legacy Roots N' Blues imprint is issuing another batch of historical recordings. Topping the list is *Bessie Smith—The Complete Recordings, Vol. 5, The Final Chapter*. Other titles include *Josh White Blues Singer 1932-1936; Emmett Miller—The Minstrel Mon From Georgia*; and two various artist compilations: *Booze and the Blues*; and *Messed Up in Love And Other Tales of Woe*.

Tclarc International has launched a new contemporary jazz label, Jazz Zone. The label is making its debut

with guitarist Ed Hamilton's album, *Planet Jazz*, which features Lenny White, George Howard and Charles Fambrough.

And while we're talking up Tclarc, look for new albums by Stephane Grappelli—recorded at the Blue Note—Luther "Guitar Junior" Johnson, Jeannie Bryson and, coming in June, Maria Muklaur.

New from Windham Hill (or related labels) any day now are albums by Steve Morse, Oystein Sevag, George Kuo and Bia Pahinui.

*Monk in The Sun*, a CD devoted to the music of Thelonious Monk, focuses on Florida jazz talent. Nat Adderley, Kenny Drew, Jr. and Jeff Berlin have contributed tracks to the recording, which will benefit Metropolitan Ministries, an organization that provides shelter, food and clothing for the homeless. (813) 832-4439.

## S I G H T I N G S A N D S I G N I N G S

boston jazz promoter Fred Taylor recently brought guitarist Pat Metheny and drummer Roy Haynes to Scullers. According to JT writer Ken Franckling, Metheny

with Benny Green, Christian McBride and Lewis Nash.

Dan Knight's name has been added to the prestigious Steinway Artist Ros-



At Scullers, from left, Pat Metheny, Fred Taylor and Roy Haynes.

told the SRO club that he has always considered Haynes a musical hero—and a player who invigorates him by adding "a thousand musical surprises" every time they play together. The guitarist said he has sometimes thought how nice it would be to have Haynes' energy and musicality when he is 70. "But the truth is...I wish I had it now."

JT contributing photographer William Gottlieb was in Washington recently to give a talk at the Kennedy Center's Performing Arts Library. His photographs of jazz greats were on exhibit there through February.

Bud Shank kicked off the year, his 70th by the way, recording in New York

ter, joining McCoy Tyner, Ahmad Jamal, Keith Jarrett, Dr. Billy Taylor and select group of jazz pianists.

The late saxophonist Jim Pepper is the focus of Pepper's *Por Wow*, a documentary by producer/director Sandra Sunrising Osawa. The film received the "Best Documentary Feature-Video Award at the American Indian Film Festival in January.

Drummer Dennis Chambers is now endorsing the Performance Snare System by Grover Pro Percussion.

Drummer Paul Wertico has joined the D'Addario/Vandoren/Evans Musician's Advisory Board. He'll provide feedback to D'Addario's Research and Development team.



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## **MARY STALLINGS Spectrum**

(Concord Jazz CCD-4689)

In a stunning follow-up to her acclaimed Concord Jazz debut *I Waited for You* (named Best Vocal Recording of 1994 by *Pulse Magazine*), the jazz vocal sensation is captured in a new album that firmly puts her alongside the greatest vocal artisans in jazz. Features special guest trumpeter Harry "Sweets" Edison.



## **JEANNIE & JIMMY CHEATHAM and the Sweet Baby Blues Band Gud Nuz Bluz**

(Concord Jazz CCD-4690)

Swinging, Kansas City style, Jeannie & Jimmy Cheatham are back spreading joy and nothing but the musical truth. No matter how you spell it, that certainly means good news for fans of jazz and blues! Features special guest Plas Johnson, "The Pink Panther" theme saxophonist.



## **RUBY BRAFF & ROGER KELLAWAY Inside & Out**

(Concord Jazz CCD-4691)

Listeners are invited to share in the discovery as cornetist Ruby Braff (a traditionalist with modern ears) and pianist Roger Kellaway (a modernist with traditional roots) together explore the jazz tradition from both sides...*Inside & Out*.



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## FESTIVALS

**J**ohn Scofield's Quartet will appear in Harrisburg, PA March 17, courtesy of the Central Pennsylvania Friends of Jazz. The Cyrus Chestnut Trio and the Nicholas Payton Quartet will pair up there April 21. (717) 540-1010.

**T**he National Concert Band Festival runs March 21-23 at Chicago's Medinah Temple and the Chicago Marriott—Downtown. The festival debuted in 1992 as a way to recognize outstanding concert bands around the country. This year's festival will feature 16 symphonic band performances by high school ensembles from eight states. (800) 848-2263.

**F**arewell Jambalaya Jam. Philadelphia is now calling its Memorial Day Weekend Fest at Penn's Landing the "Jam on the River." No talent roster so far, but organizers promise lower ticket prices.

## PRINT

**h**it Pick: Everything—and we mean everything—you ever wanted to know about guitar plectrums is found in *Picks!*, an entertaining and profusely illustrated survey of those handy celluloid slivers. It's \$12.95 and published by Miller Freeman Books. (415) 905-2367.

**G**uitarist/educator Joe Carter has written *Advancing Guitar*, a method book published by Mt. Holly Press. (203) 372-1630.

**T**he Western States Arts Federation has published its 1995-96 *Western Jazz Directory*,

**T**he early and somewhat tentative lineup for the 13th edition of International Festival Musique Actuelle in Victoriaville, Québec, May 16-20, looks interesting. Expect to hear from Evan Parker, Thurston Moore, Elliott Sharp, Eugene Chadbourne, The Far East Side Band, David Shea and lots more. (819) 752-7912.

**T**he QE2 sets sail Aug. 13 as part of the Newport Jazz Festival at Sea. On board this year will be James Moody, The Manhattan Transfer, The Duke Ellington Orchestra, Kenny Barron and a boatload more. All passengers get to attend the entire festival in Newport. (800) 225-SHIP.

**T**he first annual Forest City Jazz Festival will fill the streets and clubs of downtown London, Ontario, Sept. 17-21. A series of jazz concerts leading up to the festival is currently underway. For details: (519) 438-2731.

## EDUCATION

**Y**ou can now major in drums at Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, NY. The new major is designed to prepare students to transfer to four-year institutions that offer the same major, such as Berklee, North Texas State and Wm. Paterson College. (315) 469-2256.

## CYBER JAZZ

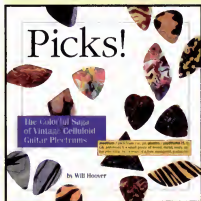
**a**s Jazz Central Station made its debut on the web, Larry Rosen announced the formation of the Jazz Central Station Board of Advisors. Members include Chick Corea, Dave Grusin, Quincy Jones, Ramsey Lewis, Tommy LiPuma, Dr. Willie Hill, Bruce Lundvall, Dr. Billy Taylor, George Wein, Dan Morgenstern, BET's Jeff Lee and *JT* publisher, Glenn Sabin.

**N**o cover charge, no minimum: The Knitting Factory is now "knitcasting" (or broadcast) its shows over the internet every night of the week. For details, check out the club's web site: <http://www.knittingfactory.com>.

**B**eyond Rolodex: Rock'n-Rom is a pop music CD database that contains listings of, among many other things, 800,000 recordings, 90,000 artists, 62,000 pop charts and 6,000 labels/companies. And it's all yours for \$1,500. (800) 780-0091.

## AIR CHECK

**M**arian McPartland's *Piano Jazz* has an impressive roster of talent scheduled for spring broadcasts. Beginning in early April, look for shows with Joshua Redman, Geri Allen, Clare Fischer, Roy Haynes, Marc Puricelli, Matt Dennis, Randy Weston, Nnenna Freelon and Jeannie Cheatham. Check the local NPR listings.



listing jazz artists and organizations in the WESTAF region. To get a copy, call WESTAF at (505) 988-1166 or mail \$5.00 for postage and

handling to WESTAF, 236 Montezuma Avenue, Santa Fe, NM 87501-2641.

**T**he fourth volume of *The*

*Jazz Family Album* is bursting with photos, the famous and not so famous. Published by the Al Cohn Memorial Jazz Collection at East Stroudsburg University, the booklet can be purchased by writing Dr. Larry Fisher, East Stroudsburg University, East Stroudsburg, PA. 18301.

**I**ntouch group inc. ([www.WorldWideMusic.com](http://www.WorldWideMusic.com)) has debuted on the internet with the largest catalog of music samples in the world—some 200,000 30-second music samples from over 400,000 CDs, all with scanned cover art. Internet users can now view, listen to, and buy music in a virtual store environment.

**FEATURING:**

Howard Alden

Manty Alexander Trio

Steve Allee

Bill Allred's Classic Jazz Band

John Altenburgh with John Greiner

Army Jazz Ambassadors

Keter Betts

John Bunch

Joan Collazo

Hal Crook

Tim Cunningham

Dwight Dickerson

Frank D'Rone Quartet

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**Lawrence Berk** died Dec. 29 in Boston of natural causes. He was 87. A pianist, composer and arranger, Berk was founder of the Berklee College of Music and played a pivotal role in establishing the school's international reputation for excellence in music education. He is survived by his son, Lee Berk, president of the school.

Trumpeter **Nelson Hatt** died on Dec. 8 in Glendale, CA. The cause of death was a stroke brought on by complications during surgery for an aortic aneurysm. He was 51. Best known for his stints with several big bands, including those led by Woody Herman and Buddy Rich, Hatt was born in San Antonio, TX, and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Rice University. In addition to his big band work, Hatt contributed to many film and television scores. He is survived by two sisters, Virginia Hay and Mary Lynn Cantrell; a brother, William E. Hatt; and his fiancée, singer Judi Wallace.

Vibist **Johnny Lytle** died on Dec. 15 in Dayton, OH from kidney failure. He was 63. Before mastering the vibraphone and becoming one of its leading exponents, Lytle played drums, percussion and piano. During his distinguished career, he recorded some 50 albums and collaborated with numerous jazz greats, including Louis

Armstrong, Lionel Hampton and Miles Davis. In recent years, Lytle recorded for Muse. A prolific composer, Lytle wrote "The Loop," "The Man," "Lela," "The More I See You" and

from complications of a knee infection. He was 68. A key figure in the *Birth of the Cool* sessions, Mulligan composed for and performed with Miles Davis' Nonet in 1949-50. In 1952, Mulligan formed a highly influential pianoless quartet in

Atlantic City and subsequently performed with Dizzy Gillespie in Philadelphia. After moving to New York in 1946, Mulligan joined Gene Krupa's band before switching to the baritone. His early accomplishments included work as an instrumentalist and/or

arranger with Benny Goodman, Claude Thornhill, Kai Winding, Charlie Parker and Davis. While working with Thornhill, Mulligan befriended his chief arranger, Gil Evans, and came under his influence. Mulligan's writing for Davis' Nonet helped define the band's "cool" sound and reflected what he had learned from Evans.

In 1952, Mulligan moved to the West Coast and formed a pianoless quartet with trumpeter Chet Baker, bassist Bob Whitlock and drummer Chico Hamilton. The band won an international following and later featured trombonist Bob Brookmeyer and trumpeter Art Farmer. Throughout the '50s and '60s, Mulligan formed a variety of intriguing bands, ranging in size from four to 13 pieces, and was widely acclaimed as an instrumentalist and composer. He remained active until his death, recording in recent years for Telarc and performing around the world with his band and symphonic orchestras. He is survived by his wife, Franca, and his son, Reed. Ira Gitler is preparing a special Mulligan tribute for our saxophone issue in June. ■



"The Village Caller," among other tunes. His last performance was with the Springfield (Ohio) Symphony Orchestra in November, 1995. He is survived by wife, Barbara; two sons, Marcel "Butch" and Michael Lamont; a daughter, A. Michelle; and other relatives.

Saxophonist, composer and bandleader **Gerry Mulligan** died Jan. 20 in Darien, CT

which his incisive baritone sax tone was prominently featured.

Born in Queens, NY, Mulligan demonstrated a gift for playing and composing music in his youth. By the time he was seven, he was already composing and copy-righting songs. While still in his teens, he played tenor saxophone in a band based in



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# mark helias

**T**he jazz genre may claim bassist Mark Helias, but don't try to compartmentalize his music. "That sort of thing is a marketing idea," he says, "and it's bad because it keeps people from experiencing new things."

Helias doesn't shy away from his jazz roots, as one listen to his latest Enja release, *Loopin' the Cool*, will attest. But his calling is simply to work as a total musician—one who plays, composes, arranges, produces, conducts, and organizes—whether for jazz combos,

full orchestras, or chamber music.

The holder of a master of music degree from Yale, Helias was lured to the bass



DAVID MAYER

when he heard his first live orchestra. "It's a powerful sound," he said. "I didn't think about the practicality of the instrument; I just vibrated to the sound of the low frequencies and reacted to the emotional response I felt."

Joining Helias on the new recording are Tom Rainey on drums and percussion; Epizo Bangoura on the *djembe* and percussion; Regina Carter on violin; and Ellery Eskelin on tenor. "I thought about that violin and tenor sax soundline in my imagination," he added, "and when we tried it, it really sounded great."

Off recent tours with Oliver Lake and Andrew Cyrille in Australia and with trombonist Ray Anderson and Gerry Hemmingway, Helias still feels some frustration when he can't play or record all he wants: "There are a lot of composers out there, but not as many orchestras as one needs." He's written a piece for a full orchestra that he's endeavoring to record and he also enjoys teaching, because it keeps him focused on the basics of playing.

"It may seem like a lot of work, but art is an active thing," he said. "And like everything else worthwhile, it takes effort."

—David Zych

# dave stryker

**A**fter nine years with sax great Stanley Turrentine, guitarist Dave Stryker decided to strike out on his own last summer. Since then he's released two fine CDs on SteepleChase that are conceptually on opposite ends of the musical spectrum. *Stardust* was his intimate, in-the-pocket trio recording of last year with organist Jody DeFrancesco and drummer Adam Nussbaum. His sixth and latest for the Denmark-based label is *Nomad*, a spirited big band affair featuring expanded versions of Stryker

compositions that had appeared on his previous small group outings.

"It was kind of like a dream come true to hear my tunes fleshed out like that," says the bop-and-blues-based guitarist. "There's really nothing like it. Being able to stand up in front of 15 cats, playing your solos and then that stuff starts kicking in behind you...it really spurs you on. And it just gave my tunes a whole new life."

Bob Parsons, Frank Griffith, Ed Palermo and Bill Warfield did all the

arrangements for *Nomad*. And while Stryker relied on Warfield's big band for the horn section, he brought in his regular rhythm section mates Scott Colley on bass and Jeff Hirschfield on drums, along with guest soloists Randy Brecker on trumpet and Steve Slagle on alto sax.

"I wanted it to be a combi-



JOHN BULL

nation of the big band meeting a small group so that it didn't seem overly written," he says. "Sometimes with a big band there's not a lot of breathing room. The arrangements are pretty tight and the drummers have to make all the hits. Of course, there's an art to that, but Jeff's approach is a lot more subtle and open. I kind of pulled him out of big band retirement. He swore he'd never do that again but I got him to do it because this was different than the typical big band. On this project he played his way."

Recorded in one evening and the following day, *Nomad* is Stryker's crowning achievement to date and one of the more ambitious big band projects of the year.

—Bill Milkowski

# roseanna vitro

Roseanna Vitro's latest recording is a *tour de force*. *Passion Dance* presents this native of Texarkana, Texas, taking chances, improvising, scatting, tossing in some dissonance and singing ballads that are 100-proof Vitro.

The project was hers from the start, and along with producer-husband Paul Wickliffe, Vitro has assembled a cast of musicians who share her vision for the recording and her passion for the art form. The finished product, however, was a

product in search of a label.

Some friends—and some label execs—suggested she cut out a rough edge or two and leave out some dissonance here and there, but Vitro hung tough and stayed true to her vision until the folks at Telarc heard the master and jumped on it with enthusiasm. "This is jazz," she asserts. "I like a bit of dissonance."

Being true to herself is important to Vitro. Her lyrics to McCoy Tyner's "Passion Dance" reflect the sentiment.



CARL FREEMAN

Pianist-arranger Kenny Werner joined Roseanna on the date, along with tenorist Gary Bartz, Ratso Harris on bass, percussionist Jamey Haddad, vocalist Kevin Mahogany who duets with Roseanna on "Blue Monk," bassist Christian McBride, trumpeter Tim Hagans, and, sitting in on drums for two of the cuts, Elvin Jones.

"I'd never played with Elvin before, but after we finished with 'As Long as You're Living,' he picked me up, trying to lift me over his head, and he said, 'Carmen's spirit is living inside of you.' It was one of those great

moments."

She knew since age three that she'd be a singer, but don't call her a jazz snob. That Texarkana side of her still exists, and look for a future recording of her doing Patsy Cline's "Walking After Midnight," but none just the way Roseanna wants it.

—David Zych

# dave young

Veteran Canadian bassist Dave Young has played with a veritable Who's Who in jazz since attending the Berklee College of Music in 1962 and returning to Toronto to become a working musician. Any American jazz artist who came through town in the '60s, '70s and '80s inevitably played with Young.

And yet, in spite of his flawless time, big, buoyant tone and bold solo ideas, Young has maintained a relatively low profile in the States. That is likely to change with the release of

two excellent CDs that highlight the bass player's keen instincts and depth of musicality—*Live at Bourbon Street* (Guitar Archives), a duet project recorded back in 1983 at the now-defunct Toronto nightclub with the late guitar virtuoso Lenny Breau, and *Two By Two* (Justin Time), the first in a series of intimate piano-bass duets.

For *Two By Two*, Young was challenged by the prospect of recording 10 tunes in three days with five different piano

players. The two tracks with Oscar Peterson came naturally since the two had played together from 1976 to 1983. But he had to strike an instant chemistry with Cedar Walton, Tommy Flanagan, John Hicks and Mulgrew Miller. The results are a testament to the bass player's ability to listen and adapt his concept of time from player to player.

"Everybody feels time a little bit differently," says



DAVE YOUNG

Young. "But whether they're on the beat or behind or ahead of it, once I know where they are, it's easier for me to fit in. A lot of guys like to lay back, but then they don't want you to lay back. So it becomes quite a musical challenge, where to put the time. I guess it just comes from a lot of training over the years, learning tunes by ear as I came up. Today's guys rely more on books and theory, but back then we trained on the job. You really had to listen."

Volume two of *Two By Two*, due out this month, will feature Ellis Marsalis, Cyrus Chestnut, Kenny Barron, Barry Harris, Renée Rosnes and the great Canadian pianist Oliver Jones.

—Bill Milkowski

## Northern Composure

# david mcmurray

**m**iles Davis' posthumous *Doo Bop* release may be recognized as a pioneering project melding jazz and rap, but Dave McMurray says he came up with the concept first. Only thing was, at the time, McMurray didn't have a recording contract. "I was playing with Bob James and I told him about my idea. I was hearing all these glossy records and I said, 'I wanna do this really dirty thing, with rap loops and me on top.' Nobody was doing it then. I thought I had a record deal, but it fell

through. Then *Doo Bop* came out, and Bob agreed, it was kind of the same thing I was talking about."

A contract with Warner Brothers now allows the saxophonist/producer/re-mixer to present his version of genre bending and blending on a disc titled *The Dave McMurray Show*. The album reflects its maker's eclectic musical experience which began in Detroit, where mentors Harold McKinney, Wendall Harrison, Marcus Belgrave and Willie Metcalf held court in the local clubs. "Everybody

had somebody they'd take under their wing... Willie Metcalf took me under his," McMurray said. A fast fan of jazz, especially the '60s music of John Coltrane, Cannonball Adderley and Wayne Shorter, McMurray expanded his horizons, going on tour with Texas blues man Albert Collins, then working with funkmaster Bootsy Collins, and the satiric pop music outfit Was (Not Was).

McMurray's album is a funky stew of all that and then some. "I enjoy jazz and R&B, but I like techno/dance music, too," he said. Upbeat rap was added "just for fun." The mix may strike some as incongruous but McMurray assures it all makes perfect sense. "I've



been to clubs in Europe where they'd play a James Brown song and go straight into Lonnie Smith and people kept on dancing. It mixed flawlessly... I was trying to do something like that." —Denzil Kasriel

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# todd phillips

assist Todd Phillips describes his latest Compass release, *Timeframe*, as "new acoustic jazz," but he admits that the term is hard to define.

"It came about for lack of anything better," he said. "The recording is actually a fusion of all my past experiences," which, he noted, include earning his stripes on the mandolin with the jazzgrass group Psychograss, and spending more than 20 years with the David Grisman Quintet, where he learned the intricacies of chord structure and composition.

"I'm basically a folk and bluegrass musician who did a lot of listening to jazz and got inspired," he said, citing John Coltrane and Bill Evans as his main catalysts. "And really, the improvisational parts of bluegrass are identical to jazz." He also credits Steely Dan, Joseph Haydn and Bill Monroe as inspirations for this recording's mix of engaging tunes.

The mandolin is basically a side trip for him—he's played the bass since he was 11, starting with the electric and moving to the upright in high school. On this recording,



however, Phillips also displays his work with the marimba, mandolin and mando-cello, as well as on percussion. He also showcases his own tunes and arrangements, and is joined by reedman Paul McCandless (of Oregon fame), who does some mirac-

ulous things on the oboe, violinist Darol Anger (Turtle Island String Quartet), Joe Caploe on vibes and drummer Paul van Wageningen.

*Timeframe* is not a bluegrass album by any stretch, but it will be sold in the bluegrass bins, which only adds to the confusion of what this product is. "It's a musical hybrid," said Phillips, who holds a Grammy for his work with J.D. Crowe and the New South. "But all the rudiments of good music are here. I think it might become an underground cult classic."

David Zych

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# cecilia smith

When asked about the fact that there have been very few women vibes players in jazz through the years, Cecilia Smith makes a valid counterpoint. "It is an unusual instrument," Smith says. "There aren't that many men playing it either."

"It's not about gender," she says. "The music should speak for itself." This 1982 Berklee College of Music graduate says she went to school with several women mallet players. "I don't know what happened to them," she said. "I seem to be the only one making recordings."

*CSQ Volume II* was released late in 1995 on the Brown-

stone label. It teamed her with three frequent collaborators—pianist Frank Wilkins, bassist Steve Kirby and drummer Ron Savage. Saxophonist Billy Pierce is special guest on three tracks. Her 1994 Brownstone debut,



*The Takeoff*, used Wilkins, Savage and bassist Lonnie Plaxico. "The new recording has received a lot of good national attention," Smith said. "People are surprised at the level of my playing, writing and arranging abilities. It gives me hope for the future."

For many years, the Ohio native split her time between Boston and New York, teaching at Berklee and performing regularly in both cities. She is now focusing entirely on the Big Apple, where she plays a brand of mainstream jazz she describes as "hard swing" influenced by Bobby Hutcherson, Miles Davis, John Coltrane and McCoy Tyner.

In addition to performing with her own band and

subbing occasionally in the Spirit of Life Ensemble, Smith also teaches in three non-profit music education programs in New York. Last year, she was hired to write and perform the music for the full-length film, *Naked Acts*.

One of the highlights of *CSQ Volume II* is Smith's soulful arrangement of the Carole King pop song "Natural Woman," which Aretha Franklin turned into a mega-hit. "I love funk and I love vocalists. I listen to Aretha records constantly. I came up with a vamp that has nothing to do with the original piece, but adds a lot to it. That's the magic of this music," Smith said. "I feel responsibility to attract new listeners without diminishing the integrity of the art form." — Ken Franckling

# ed schuller

Bass player Ed Schuller is a musical adventurer with a strong family legacy and a simple philosophy. "If you don't challenge yourself, you don't move forward," says Schuller, who released his third recording as a leader in late 1995.

*To Know Where One Is*, on GM Recordings, the Massachusetts-based label run by his father, Gunther Schuller, is a robust follow to *Mu-Point* and *Eleventh Hour*, released on Europe's Tutu label. It is a quintet session featuring longtime friend Joe Lovano on tenor and soprano saxes, trombonist Gary Valente,

drummer Billy Hart and guitarist Bill Bickford.

"How we come up with things is one of the great mysteries of life. I'm not a prolific composer in the sense that my father is, but I seem to come up with ideas when I need to," he says. "I'm not pushing myself as a composer as much as creating situations in which I can pursue ideas with a specific set of players. I want to create situations where things come out of the unknown."

The music Schuller writes for his working group, The Eleventh Hour Band, has a spirit comparable to the work of Charles Mingus and Carla

Bley. *To Know Where One Is* contains nine original tunes plus a Mingus tribute called "Chazz," which was written by his brother, drummer George Schuller. "I am influenced by Mingus, not specifically in how he wrote music, but the fact that he was a bass player, led a band and wrote ambitious music," Ed Schuller says.

When not touring with his own band or as a sideman in

Lovano's Symbiosis group, Schuller splits his time between New York and Berlin, where he teaches and works regularly with progressive jazz groups.

"I've found that the audience and the whole way with dealing with business is much more professional and gratifying than it seems to be in America," Schuller said. "Berlin is one of the most interesting places in terms of an evolving jazz scene. I bring the American vibe, so to speak. Young players are evolving because of all the changes that have gone on since the wall came down. There seems to be an influx of culture and art of all sorts coming into Berlin. It is a very interesting place to be." — Ken Franckling



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# But not for





# Billie

## Assessing Lady Day's art and impact

*No people sing with  
such pure voices as  
those who live in  
deepest hell; what we  
take for the song of  
angels is their song.*

FRANZ KAFKA

Billie Holiday had the kind of voice you never forget. No singer has ever distilled despair into such tones. She was a great natural born actress who drew on her own feelings and conveyed them with an honesty that cuts right to the quick. But like so many of her musical contemporaries of the era, she suffered from that incurable disease, being horn black in America.

Early in her career while she was on the road with Count Basie, Billie was forced to blacken her face to play at the fashionable Fox Theatre in Detroit because the management felt she was too high a yellow to sing with his black band. Billie made the gig, but later acknowledged that "I had to be darkened so the show could go on in dynamic-assed Detroit. There's no damn business like show business. You have to smile to keep from throwing up."

Yet against the backdrop of an all too brief lifetime of hardship (she died at 44), Billie defined style and personality and with no technique training, created sophisticated music with such soulful diction and dramatically intense phrasing that her sound is instantly recognizable and beloved worldwide.

Some of her most inspired legacy is found on the 49 sides she made with Lester Young. Theirs was surely a musical

marriage conceived in Eden. She dubbed him "Pres," he named her "Lady Day" and together, they created masterpieces like "Foolin' Myself," and "Easy Living." Pres' personal favorite was "A Sailboat in the Moonlight" in which voice and sax are truly one, perhaps the

greatest recorded example of the interplay between a vocal line and an instrumental obligato.

Their last recorded performance was the *Sound Of Jazz* broadcast in December of '57 where Billie, Pres, Ben Webster, Coleman Hawkins, Vic Dickenson, Gerry Mulligan and Roy El-drige did her song, "Fine and Mellow." Thankfully, this remarkable documentation of singular instrumental and improvisational individuality and inventiveness is available on video. But no matter what the medium, Billie Holiday produced a series of indelible musical images guaranteed to survive the ages.

Her tragic final years were a pathetic struggle against heroin addiction, which eventually killed her, and police harassment. In New York City, because of her legal entanglements, she was unable to secure the necessary cabaret card that would enable her to sing at clubs. Yet later recordings show that, although her voice was devastated, her technique remained supreme.

For this tribute to our greatest jazz singer, we spoke with her contemporaries and present day admirers.

### DEE DEE BRIDGEWATER

Billie sings with so much emotion that it just oozes from her voice when she sings. She had a way of taking a song and making it totally her own by the way she interpreted it and it was great. I think that's why people loved her. The other thing that made her fascinating and popular was her tragic life. For some reason human beings are fascinated with people who have tragic lives like Billie or Marilyn Monroe or James Dean. Here in Europe, there's a huge fascination with Chet Baker. I guess it's human nature, we're attracted to things that are considered to be taboo so the kind of life that she lived was kind of a taboo life.



*By Bret Primack*

*Photography by  
Herman Leonard*

The kind of life that Jimi Hendrix or Janis Joplin lived, those were all kind of tahoo lives. When they're snuffed out young it makes for another myth...

I'm sure that her tragic life affected her singing but probably in an unconscious way, probably something she wasn't even aware of. For example, if I'm feeling angry about something when I do a concert, I'm more aggressive when I sing. If I'm feeling cool and happy, my approach is much more melodic. You can hear the effects of her lifestyle in her late recordings. Her voice was very broken because of the ravages of the drugs that she had been taking and the hard life that she had been living, so that's kind of apparent.

#### DIANE SCHUUR

Billie sang with great depth and great sadness. Even in the songs that are upbeat, there's a touch of what I feel to be a little sadness in her voice. But in her sadness, she's very moving and very touching.

A friend of mine read me some of her autobiography, *Lady Sings the Blues*. What I found the most interesting was that she suffered drug and alcohol abuse and unfortunately, was never able to recover from that. I feel very fortunate that I'm recovered from those things and I'm very sorry that she wasn't able to do that because it robbed her of so much.

Billie seems to have been a person of great vulnerability. I think she tried to rise above a lot of things that were happening in that era, but she had a hard time of it, and I can hear that it really comes out in the music; I have a great deal of empathy for her.

#### DIANA KRALL

When I was really getting into her I was studying with Jimmy Rowles in L.A., he was her accompanist. Jimmy would tell these stories about them playing together. It wasn't an instant connection at first because I was listening to Ella and Nat but Jimmy gave me *Lady in Satin*, which I still have, and which is one of my desert island records. He told me they had to hold

her up to do the date.

For me, she's an example of a musician's singer...her phrasing, her emotion, all the things we know and love about Billie Holiday, the vulnerability in her work. She might not have an instrument, a voice like Sarah or Ella, but it was her musicianship, her artistry which was so important.

And there's a lot of emotion involved. I know how it makes me feel when I listen to her, everything from groove to heart-wrenching ballads, she really makes you feel.

#### GIACOMO GATES

What jazz singer doesn't listen to Billie when they're learning to sing, even male singers? Every time I sing a ballad, there's some kind of Billie Hol-



day influence and I think that's true for every serious jazz singer.

Like you hear Chet Baker singing, you hear Billie Holiday in Chet, you hear what we tend to believe is her personality. She's got that within thing that she just happens to let you in on when she's singing. Chet Baker had that same kind of style—that introverted, tortured, pained expression that came out.

#### ABBEY LINCOLN

I first heard her on a Victrola when I was about 14, living on a farm in Michigan. It was instant communication. I don't remember what she was singing about but the sound of her voice, it went right to me. She sounded so human.

Later on, I worked in Honolulu for two years. Billie came to town and worked at another club where they were hiring names, like Louis Armstrong and Anita O'Day. She came to the club I was working a couple of times, in between shows, just around the corner, maybe she came to get away from where she was. It was just wonderful to have her in the room...

She was awesome and special and I did not approach her and try to be her equal. She was my elder. I didn't know her. I'd heard many things about her and I didn't assume anything...

Now she's in my head. Everything I've ever heard her do. She's my greatest inspiration as a singer because she was also a writer and a great woman who was out here all by herself. She was a queen without an army and anybody to protect her.

There's one thing about Miss Holiday, she didn't do anything for money. And she didn't sell her people down the river for some change. She was true to the people. She sang about what was in her heart, not for bucks. The industry makes a lot of money in her name still, today, more than ever.

They say she didn't have a big range but she had a range big enough to sing great songs, so her range must have been all right. She didn't scat, she didn't imitate a horn, she told a story in a sweet voice.

Billie was a philosopher, too, what she said was true. She sang more than just love songs, she sang about the world she lived in and that's why she's still great. God bless the child that's got their own, that's what this world is. And "Strange Fruit," about the people being

lynched on the tree, a brilliant song that she had the courage to sing. She's the greatest singer of her era and her life is a great monument to this country.

## JACKIE CAIN

One of the first Billie Holiday records I heard was "Strange Fruit." I listened to it over and over and I said to myself, is that really what I'm hearing? That those words would be on a record, it was shocking to me, and the fact that somebody would have the courage to sing that, come out and say these kinds of things...

I was used to hearing people like Jo Stafford, the records of the day, the pop stuff. Peggy Lee was prominent at that time. When I first got these Billie Holiday records I remember being totally mesmerized by her style, her sound, what I would now call soulfulness, but at that time I probably didn't even know the word.

My husband Roy Kral and I got to know her well we worked opposite her back in the '40s and '50s, when we started out with Charlie Ventura's orchestra. She was on the scene at the same time so we worked quite a few places together. We always got along very well. I liked her and she liked me. She was different at different times, sometimes she was very warm, it depended on what she was into. When she was healthy and being pretty straight she was very warm and very friendly, we got along real well. She was just a very sweet, wonderful woman, with kind of a gutsy voice, very soulful, just very down to earth.

I knew other people who also knew her well, friends of mine from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who were fans of hers, one fellow in particular who's an artist up there. She liked him so she always stayed at his house when she was in that area. One interesting story...she made out a grocery list when she was at his house because he was going to the store. He said, "do you need anything, do you want me to pick up anything for you?" And her grocery list was ciga-

rettes, gin and dog food, which I thought was kind of funny. He had saved it and showed it to us.

Billie always used to come and see us whenever we worked anywhere and after we left Charlie Ventura we had a group of our own, a sextet—a cello player, a guitar player and of course my husband plays piano. We were working at Bop City opposite Slim Gaillard and Billie came in to catch both groups.

She loved dogs. She always had a



BILLIE HOLIDAY: J. JORDAN/RETNA; CHARLIE VENTURA: J. JORDAN/RETNA

pet. One time we were working on 125th Street, at a place called the Apollo Bar, which was near to the Apollo Theatre. There was a bar in the front and a room in the back where they presented music groups. She came in there one night, I'll never forget it, because she came in with her boxer, it was just a beautiful dog. They let her come in with the dog and everything. She came in the back and she sat at a table and she had her dog sitting right next to her. It was great because I'm sure they wouldn't have allowed anyone else to bring a dog in there but they allowed her because she was Billie.

## IRA GITLER

I had the good fortune to hear her in person a number of times, of course you must remember she couldn't work in the clubs. In my book *Swing to Bop*, I talk about taking this girl that I had a crush on in high school to hear Billie Holiday. I wasn't dating that much in high school so it was a really big deal. In those days, there were no dressing rooms in those clubs and so the performers would leave and

go to club hop. Billie came by with her boxer, who was very famous. This is before she got into Chihuahua, she had this boxer named Mister. Everybody knew the name of Billie Holiday's dog.

She came up the narrow aisle, we were sitting at a table in the middle, there were two narrow aisles on either side and hanquettes, that's the way those clubs were. A few minutes after Billie had walked by us, with her gardenia glistening, my date said to me, "oh, Miss Hollywood's dog almost bit me." I guess she went to pet the dog and the dog made a move at her. I wasn't even aware of it but when she said, "Miss Hollywood's dog nearly bit me," she was

finished. That was her last date.

## VANESSA RUBIN

When I first started listening to jazz vocalists, to Nancy and Sarah, I was into this beautiful voice and tonality, melodic phrasing and so forth. Then when I first heard Billie, because what I first heard were her later recordings, I heard this very rough, kind of crying kind of voice. I thought it was so different. It didn't sound open and full of joy or anything. It was really, really depressing at first. Then I went back and heard about her life, her story and

that's when I began to understand why she sounded that way, why she communicated the things that she did. Billie Holiday is someone that I really had to learn to appreciate.

#### DIANNE REEVES

I was very young when I first heard her, I think I was in the tenth grade when my uncle gave me a record of hers. I didn't understand her so I didn't listen to her, I didn't like her. It wasn't until I left home and got out there on my own and started living that I started listening to her again and I just loved her because I realized that at the time, she sang her life, her experiences from life to song.

Then people would talk about her and say she was a victim of this and a victim of that, and I would think, no, this person is incredibly strong. Maybe she was victimized by society but I



never looked at her and saw Billie looking at herself as a victim...

The more I've listened to her, the more I've grown to love her spirit and her strength. A lot of the things that she sang and the way that she sang them were like telling stories through songs with an incredible understanding of what she was singing.

People like Billie and Sarah, they had their unique way of singing a song. They

were very in touch with their own voices, which is a very important thing. You listen to them and you get inspired by them, but you can never be them...

#### SANDRA REAVES

I've been performing her music for 15 years in my show *Great Ladies of Blues and Jazz*. I do a tribute to her because she is one of my most special people of all times...

I heard Billie's music off and on because my aunt used to play all kinds of jazz at home but I really wasn't all that in-

terested because I came out of the doo-wop and that's where my ear was tuned to, until in 1980 my audiences began requesting certain songs when I was working at the Cotton Club. It haunted me that I really didn't know Billie so I began to seriously research the woman and her music and eventually it evolved into a show.

Studying Billie's life, it's like a person who never stops unwinding—Billie's

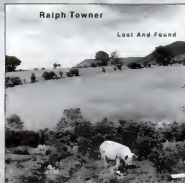
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music, legacy, the heritage that she left it just seems to never stop unwinding. I know Milt Hinton, who's worked with her, and the late Bill Dillard, who was her trumpeter. They would talk about her to me, say how sensitive she was but at the same time, she was one of the guys.

Because she had so many things haunting her from the past, well, some people said that was weakness but I found it to be an underlying strength. I felt like she was really a fighter though she was not as strong as the negatives that were overtaking her. But she did do right. She did try to overcome but she was just weaker than the negatives around her. I feel optimistic about Billie though, that if she would have had one more chance, she would have made it.

Billie Holiday was a really heavy artist. If she was here with us today and had gotten her life clean, she would have been a hell of an actress because she would have had a story to tell. She would have been able to show you some emotions, real emotions, she wouldn't have had to connect anything.

#### DAKOTA STATON

I wish I'd known her as a person. She seems like she would have been a nice friend and her music was so superb, her lyrics were dynamite, her stories were dynamite.

But for me, it was the repertoire, I'm a person who believes that if she had the best repertoire, she probably had the best stage presence, she probably had the best wardrobe, and it goes best all the way down, through and through, through the art form down to the tip of the toes, I think that's the type of person she must have been.

You see Billie was an entrepreneur of songs. Her repertoire far excelled the rest of the singers who were singing at that time. Her material was just fabulous, it was great. She had the best material.

#### VANESSA RUBIN

When I first decided to pursue music as a profession, the song I broke into this business with was "God Bless the Child." I never really knew the song was closely associated with her. I just really liked it. When I did that the first

# Snap, Crackle, Pop is great in your cereal

Art Blakey and  
The Jazz Messengers



Dizzy Gillespie



Roy Haynes Quartet



Continues on page 108

Act on Impulse!



# joe sample

BY PATRICIA MYERS

Joe Sample has always been a crusader—even without the capital C. But a lifetime of dedication to music intensified after he faced death while performing in Osaka, Japan.

He was on stage in May 1994 when he felt the stabbing pain of a heart attack, "I recognized that it was a coronary problem, but I continued to play," he recalls. "I made the decision that if I was going to die, I was going to die playing piano. I was having a conversation with God, that if He wanted to take me out now, He'd have to come and get me.

"I was angry because, during the past few weeks, I felt I had reached a higher level in my playing. I was angry that I was going to die with only two weeks of this level of musicality."

The pain lasted 25 minutes, he says. Before leaving Japan, Joe had angioplasty to clean the affected artery. Back home in Mammoth Lakes, CA, he had another attack and more angioplasty before triple bypass surgery in January, 1995.

After heart surgery, he says, "You reach a conclusion and then make some decisions. From that moment on, I knew that I was more dedicated to music than probably any other time in my life. I didn't play for a year and a half, but now I feel that same higher level coming again. I know what it

felt like and what I want to do. I'm 56, I feel wonderful and I'm raring to go.

"My motivation now is very extreme, more intense because I have a better idea of what is going on with my music, and I can't wait to get into projects."

Joe's three decades of success with The Crusaders also included a solo career and both studio and concert work with stars like Marvin Gaye, Tina Turner, B.B. King, Joe Cocker, Randy Crawford, Anita Baker and Andraé Crouch.

Al Jarreau, Michael Franks and Take 6 were on *Spellbound*, a 1989 release for Warner Bros Records.

A new long-term project is a musical about the black nuns of New Orleans whose founder, Henriette Delille, is a candidate for canonization. The musical's book is being written by Dr. Michael White, a professor at Xavier University and a clarinetist who plays the music of New Orleans in the '20s.

Sample's latest issue is *Old Places Old Faces* for Warner. He plays acoustic piano, with Jay Anderson on bass, Ralph Penland on drums and Lennie Castro on percussion, plus tenor saxophonist Charles Lloyd and

guitarist Dean Parks on some tracks.

"My idea was to emphasize musically those places or experiences that had a profound meaning in building my character, my personality and my music. Every song has a story," he says.

The opening track, "Free Yourself," relates to when Joe was 20 years old and decided to see a psychologist. "I had something within me that was bothering me, and I came to the conclusion that I did not

## soul survivor

like myself. The psychologist helped me figure out that the most important thing on earth was to love myself, that I was going to have a troubled life if I did not learn to love myself. I made a decision never again to allow anyone else to have a negative effect on my emotions.

"You simply build a fortress around yourself and, if someone wants to come in bringing their happiness, they can come in and we can share



each other's happiness. But if someone is bringing me ill tidings, then I have a fortress I can kick them out of."

The second track, "Black and White," refers to an incident in his teen years when he was fired as a dishwasher twice in three weeks, by a white man and a black man. "I said to myself then, 'I will never again have a boss-man in my life. I'm going back to the black and white keys of the piano.'"

"When I was practicing in those early years, I loved to sit at the piano and touch it in a very expressive manner, to generate emotion.



On this particular album, I know I was touching the instrument in an extremely expressive manner. The other musicians were supportive, feeling what I was feeling, allowing me to touch the piano in a very special way.

"The signature of any artist is the voice or the sound of the instrument. This album gave me the opportunity to showcase all the variations I am made of, covering a very large area of my emotions in blues, jazz and Latin."

Joe's foremost crusade these days

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is putting soul back into American music. That was a key element of his Houston high school band, The Swingsters. Featuring saxophonist Wilton Felder, drummer Nesbert "Stix" Hooper and later trombonist Wayne Henderson, the Texas teens' sound was an earthy jazz-fusion that evolved into The Crusaders and gained gold and platinum records from the '60s into the '80s.

This year, GRP is releasing a revised version of the label's 1992 issue of *The Crusaders: The Golden Years*. Sample said the new three-disc box set will include some of the band's older recordings when the aggregation was known as The Jazz Crusaders.

When talking about his new crusade, Joe criticizes the big-business aspect of American music. "At this point in my life, I have be-

come very, very vocal about the fact that corporate structures entered the American music business with concepts and promises to sell product."

Mega recording companies, radio stations and MTV are destroying artistic creativity, he contends. "By 1982, the wonderful American world of creative powers came to a halt. It seems the style today is to keep all the excitement out of music. We used to have 20 distinct artists on the charts. Now it's like forcing everyone to eat corn flakes for breakfast, or just eat Chinese food for the rest of our lives. Very boring, extremely generic, just a higher level of Muzak."

He continues, "The great American music genius has been suffocated, strangled and choked by corporate management that's become

so powerful, busy selling product and looking for profit. America gave the world an incredible amount of music—ragtime, blues, gospel, Dixieland, swing, big bands, hot and cool jazz, hard jazz, 'out' jazz, soul, funk, Broadway musicals, country and bluegrass. But music has become a playground for corporate managers who amass wealth. It has become obvious to me that there is a preoccupation to make more and more profit, even if it means destroying your own culture.

"As an artist, that is anti to my nature and to my natural instincts. In '94, I told Warner Bros. that I was going to create a soulful band to carry on the tradition. That was because I recognized that going into the next century, we don't have any bands playing what I call

soulful music. That's what The Soul Committee was all about," he says, referring to his octet with drummer Steve Gadd, percussionist Lennie Castro, bassist Freddie Washington, guitarists Arthur Adams and Michael Landau, trumpeter Oscar Brashear and tenorman Joel Peskin, who recorded *Did You Hear That?* for Warner.

While recognizing that independent labels are trying to combat the commercialism, Joe foresees a gloomy future for 21st-century American music. "I will always find a haven for my music in the rest of the world, but if we continue the direction we're going in America, all the artists are going to be removed and we'll simply have the clones." ☘

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BY WILLARD JENKINS

CHARNETT MOFFETT

OUT  
ON A  
LIMB—  
AND  
LOVING  
IT

Though only 28 years old, Charnett Moffett seems to have been part of the jazz fabric for much longer than that. One must pause to consider the depth and breadth of his experiences, particularly when faced with the fact that this is his twenty-first year as a musician. Blessed with a lively upbringing full of music ("Ellington was in the household.... there was also a lot of avant garde music and funk," he recalls) and musicians (father Charles is a resourceful cutting edge drummer, and his other four sibs, including drummer Cody, are all musicians), Charnett became the bassist for the Moffett family band at the age of seven. From there the New York City native has gone on to work in situations ranging from the bands of Wynton Marsalis to Charles Lowe, Bette Midler to Ornette Coleman, Anita Baker to Arturo Sandoval, with numerous sidetrips and a discography with over 70 entries.

In a sense he came full-circle when he joined Ornette Coleman's quartet two years ago. You see, the name Charnett is actually a contraction of his father and Coleman's first names. During our recent conversation Charnett spoke with great pleasure about the experience of working with a man he has known almost since birth. What started out as a quartet with Don Cherry and Coleman's son Denardo on drums—and evolved into an even different approach when pianist Geri Allen replaced Cherry—became a two-year touring odyssey that was captured for posterity on a recording scheduled for release later this year and is still ongoing, albeit sporadically. For the most part Moffett is concentrating his current energies on establishing a band sound reflective of his latest recording, *Planet Home* on Evidence Records, and he is bent on transcending his instruments: string bass, electric bass, and piccolo electric bass.

Our conversation revealed an extremely pleasant, thoughtful, bright young artist who is quite elusive, who prefers to speak somewhat in generalities and is loathe to be drawn into controversy or raw analyses. Properly confident in his skills on the bass, skills which were startling when he first

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came on the scene, particularly when he joined Marsalis, and skills which have been rather stylistically mercurial since then, Moffett endeavors to exceed the confines of his instruments. "I'm concentrating on a concept, I'm not dealing with the bass," he declares. "I already know I can play the bass, so now I'm trying to figure out my approach and sound. There are people you can easily identify—Jimi Hendrix, Nat King Cole, Bob Marley—that's what I'm striving for. Just like with John Coltrane, the fact that they were able to transcend their instruments...they got to a point where you didn't have to think about what instrument was making the music. I think that's what every artist strives for, developing a voice."

The voice Moffett presents on *Planet Home* is one which finds Charnett assuming dual roles as lead bassist and foundation support man in what is essentially a rhythm section consisting of Geoff Keezer on piano and synthesizer, and Victor Lewis on drums. Establishing a bass presence whose closest forebears are childhood idols Stanley Clarke and Jaco Pastorius, Moffett is chief soloist as well as the centrifugal force powering the session. A date which at once presents an atmosphere that suggests—dare we say it—fusion, while at the same time dancing along the cutting edge, *Planet Home* is a curious concept. What was the motivation?

"Actually the motivation was based on a life experience I had of witnessing a UFO in Sardinia, or at least that's what I believe it was. I saw this object and basically what I tried to get to musically was what would be sound for the object. What I saw had no sound but I thought if it had sound, what would that sound like? [*Planet Home*, particularly the title track] was my interpretation of what I thought the object would sound like if it had sound." Though unidentified flying object sightings are legion, skeptical believers far outnumber those who have been touched. So perhaps Charnett's shifty downfield running around follow-up inquiries was wholly understandable.

"Music is something that we all have to deal with every day," he responded. "It's part of our life. So we need to try to find balance so we can express certain

things that happen in life. The sound that I thought this UFO had, I was trying to compose some related sounds." This was Charnett's summation of the experience and its current manifestation on *Planet Home*.

Many of Charnett's generation have eschewed, even disclaimed, the use of synthesizers and other electronic accouterments. Thus, their utilization on *Planet Home* comes as at least a mild surprise to the listener. "Technology is very much a part of our world today and we should not be afraid of it," the bassist suggests. "Sometimes you've gotta take chances and go out on a limb, that's why I always seek honesty, that's the only way you can achieve what it is that you want to get across, playing from the heart—whether you're swinging in the African way or swinging in the calypso way or swinging in the rock or funk way."

"Quite honestly I think I just took more chances with *Planet Home* than I did on the previous records, and tried to stay truer to the form and tried to expand on those ideas, along with this particular concept. I've used synthesizers before and it's just always something that I've heard as a part of the sound to be utilized as color." Indeed, Keezer's synthesizer work is largely confined to coloration on *Planet Home*. The basses are the centerpiece and the album is clearly a jazz outing. "I don't think the synthesizer is such a different instrument than the piano in terms of it being something so extremely different," he continued. "On *Planet Home* I tried to merge the natural, organic sounds of music with fusion stuff that would come off in a centered kind of way, neither the left side OR the right side. I would like to think of it as just music."

*Planet Home* closes with a solo bass tour de force, an electronically enhanced rendering of "The Star Spangled Banner" in obvious tribute to the Jimi Hendrix incendiary classic from Woodstock. Charnett was quite delighted that Jimi comes through loud and clear in his arrangement. "That's a high compliment and it was quite a challenge to try that on the acoustic bass. Basically I used a rack of different pedals—digital

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VICTOR WOOTEN

# BEYOND THE

# FLECKTONES



Will Lee and Stanley Clarke.

Now, after five albums on Warner Bros. with The Flecktones, Wooten is stepping out with his solo debut, *A Show Of Hands* on the small Nashville-based independent label Compass Records. The key word here is solo. Not only is Victor unaccompanied on all 10 tracks but there are no overdubs whatsoever. What you hear is what he played directly into the DAT, live and uncut. Few other bass players could summon up so much music from just four strings but Wooten pulls it off with a stunning bit of virtuosity, grace and nonchalance.

In short, he makes the impossible seem easy, whether he's deep in the pocket on "U Can't Hold No Groove," laying down lush chords on a faithful reading of Stevie Wonder's "Overjoyed," flowing through complex arpeggios on the stunning chops vehicle "Classical Thump," rapping and slapping on the autobiographical "Me and My Bass Guitar," tapping out Bach-like counterpoint lines on the title track or swinging on a medley of jazz standards.

A major inspiration for Wooten's unique approach to the electric bass was guitarist Stanley Jordan, whose pioneering work with two-handed tapping on the fretboard had a big impact on a generation of players. "The first time I saw Stanley," he recalls, "I had my bass with me. After his set I went backstage to talk to him and gave him my bass to play, which is one of the things I like to do...just to see how other musicians would play on my instrument. Sometimes, especially when it's not a bass player, I end up getting some really

different kinds of ideas. Well, Stanley picked up my bass and just went to town. It was incredible. And I ended up incorporating some of what he played that day into this piece 'The Vision.' Technique-wise, he inspired me so much. Hearing his first couple of albums made my own technique take two giant steps forward."

Another influence on Wooten's musical outlook was the late Jaco Pastorius. "I never saw Jaco perform but he was a huge inspiration for me, just in terms of the pure emotion he played with." After a recent Flecktones concert, Wooten was approached by an admiring fan who identified himself as Felix Pastorius, Jaco's 13-year-old son who himself is a budding bassist. "He asked me for an autograph and I just hugged him," says Wooten. "It was a special moment for me because this was really the closest I've ever been to Jaco."

Although Wooten has been given quite a good bit of room to strut his stuff in The Flecktones, both on record and in concert, *A Show Of Hands* reveals some other sides to the bass player's musical makeup.

"This solo album is something I wanted to do for a long time, ever since I was a teenager," says Victor. "It's a complete picture of who I am. My goal was to make a musical record that people could listen to for 40 minutes without getting tired of hearing the same instrument; a record that people could maybe dance to and wouldn't necessarily need to know that I'm playing such and such a scale over this chord here. And I also put in some positive messages with the

Anyone who has ever seen Victor Wooten perform with Béla Fleck & The Flecktones can appreciate why he was named "Bassist of the Year" in 1993 by the readers of *Bass Player* magazine. His phenomenal chops combined with a depth of musicality and charismatic stage presence make him a serious triple threat in any band. Not only is the guy capable of playing luscious chords, slapping monstrously funky basslines and tapping complex counterpoint lines on his instrument, but he can actually do back flips with the thing as well; all of which has earned him international acclaim and the admiration of fellow bassists like Marcus Miller,



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music, which is what those spoken word interludes are all about."

One of the spoken word pieces, "Keep Chargin'", is a brief motivational speech from Victor's father. And on "Words of Wisdom" the bassist incorporates his mother's voice alongside uplifting messages from Malcolm X and Dr. Martin Luther King. "My parents are where my whole lifestyle comes from," says Wooten, "so I just sat them down and said, 'Let me get on tape some of the things you always used to say to me.'" A child prodigy, the native of Newport News, Virginia, started playing bass at the age of five and together with his brothers formed The Wootens. They worked regularly around Nashville in the early '80s and went on to record an album for Arista Records in 1985. In 1990, Victor and his drummer brother Roy "Future Man" Wooten were recruited to join banjo virtuoso Béla Fleck in his genre-busting band The Flecktones. Through five CDs on Warner Bros., the band has consistently defied categories while piling up accolades. In releasing his highly eclectic solo project, Victor now faces some of the same problems The Flecktones encountered along the way.

"There's no easy formula for this record, which is also true of The Flecktones' music," he says. "What do you call it? Is it jazz? Is it fusion? Is it bluegrass or chamber music or something else? I ran into this kind of trouble with other labels when I was sending out demo tapes trying to get a deal. Most of the people I contacted didn't know how to market it because they heard a classical piece then a rap tune and then a jazz medley. But the people who run Compass (banjoist Allison Brown and bassist Gary West) immediately understood the music. Being a small and new label, they don't already have a formula that they're following, which means they're more open to the music. They ended up putting out my record because they liked the music. If you were a record label that just followed formulas there is no way you'd put this out. But if you were a person who really liked music, you would accept the challenge. And that's what Compass did."

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**A**t the Montréal Jazz Festival last summer, Benny Carter showed up as one of the headliners, a gracious presence, a living musical treasure, and a droll personality. "I haven't been here since 1986," he teased the crowd. "I've been wondering why they forgot me." In truth, Benny Carter has never really been forgotten. He has been a quiet, solid pillar in jazz annals since he began to gain notice for his smart big band work around 1930. At this point, the jazz world is remembering Carter with ever greater intensity and respect.

As many of Carter's recent projects have necessarily been, this was an inter-generational convergence that night in Montréal. As Carter described the group, "we have the young lion Eric Reed and the not-so-young lion Charlie Haden. Just call me Simba." He made the term seasoned work for him. As expected, Carter issued crisply-articulated solos that managed the feat of being both fresh and vintage, their genteel contours extending back beyond bebop. No unruly slurs or smears, no angsty venting, no iconoclasm, just well-chiselled eloquence, even on the theme of, say, "Misty."

At age 88, Benny Carter has truly been there, done that, and—not insignificantly—is still doing it, with wit and creative instincts intact. Carter is a no-nonsense player with genuine, lived-in roots in both swing and bop eras, whose improvisations are delivered with effortless agility and economy. He seizes notes with fluttering, pre-bop vibrato and then carves out brief, intricate phrases that bear the stamp of bop think. History breathes through his horn.

In interviews these days, he politely indulges questions, but clearly has no particular interest in adding to the barrage of verbiage surrounding his long life in music.

"I'm a very bad interviewee," Carter says, good-naturedly, up front. "Someone should have warned you. I don't consider myself a voice of authority. I know that people feel a little reverent toward an older person, but I haven't really done it all, nor seen it all. I have to put out disclaimers. You've got to know I'm 88 years old and I've answered these questions for the last 60 years. One of these

days, you'll be 88 years old, too, if you're careful. And I hope when you get to 88, you will have had as much fun as I have."

Carter agreed to an interview from his home in Los Angeles, just before heading off to Bangkok to play with the Count Basie Orchestra. Generally, the road is not his trip these days. "I don't tour a great deal; can't do one-nighters anymore. I just won't. I'll do a concert here and there, and might be in one place for maybe five days. Otherwise, every engagement is like a little vacation. Traveling today is so difficult. Traveling is harrowing. Performing is one thing, but getting there is something else. That's what I always dread."

Looking back over the arc of his career, Carter came to know the road intimately in his early years, then spent many years hunkered down in one

# BENNY CARTER FOREVER IN TUNE

BY JOSEF WOODARD

place—Hollywood. Now, things have come more or less full circle, as he reexperiences the life of the jazz musician, making albums and, however sparingly, traveling.

The story, in short form: Carter was born in New York in 1907 and worked as a sideman in the '20s before starting his long big band connection with Fletcher Henderson's orchestra. By the early '30s, he had started his own band, of increasingly good repute. His arrangement skills were tapped by Duke Ellington, Count Basie and other bands, and, in the early '40s, he slid comfortably into the bebop era with a sextet that included

Dizzy Gillespie and Kenny Clarke. Then Hollywood called. When Carter went west with his orchestra for a two-week stint, he was asked to score the film *Stormy Weather*, at a time before jazz musicians were finding homes in that industry. That led to over two decades of work in film and television scoring, while playing jazz on the side.

When he worked in Hollywood, did Carter ever have the feeling of leading a double life, being a film composer by day and jazz musician by night? "No, I didn't," reports Carter, ever the pragmatist. "It was all a part of what I do for a living, and for enjoyment as well. It was all music."

Over the past decade, the MusicMasters label has been very good to Carter, who has put out several projects on the label, including the latest, *Songbook*. In the '90s alone, Carter nabbed two Grammys for his *Harlem Renaissance* and *Elegy in Blue* albums. Clearly, at this relatively late date in his career, Carter is in the midst of an important chapter in his recording output.

"It's the longest affiliation I've had with one company," he says of the MusicMasters deal. "I feel that it's a very comfortable relationship. (Owner) Jeff Nissim is also a musician, and a very knowledgeable one. In these days of lawyers and accountants running companies, it's very refreshing to have someone like that working with you."

*Songbook* is just that: a set of songs with music and sometimes lyrics penned by Carter, and sung by an all-star cast of guest vocalists, including Dianne Reeves, Joe Williams, Jon Hendricks, Shirley Horn, Diana Krall, Ruth Brown, Bobby Short and Peggy Lee, who closes the album with the tender, endearing "I See You." Carter offers, "I'd say that Miss Peggy Lee is icing on the cake."

According to Carter, the idea for the project "has been bubbling for awhile. I wanted to do an album of my songs, with lyrics, with a story being told, and not only the instrumental qualities. I've just been so busy performing and writing that I haven't gotten around to it. We were very happy that the singers we wanted were available, and that they

would make themselves available."

The vocal guests, says Carter, "were enthusiastic and they seemed to like the material. From the way they did it, I couldn't have asked for better renditions. I'm most happy and fortunate to have them. Many of the songs have my lyrics to them, and they're all my melodies. I was very pleased that the singers accepted these as do-able, as making sense."

A humble, unpretentious sort who would rather make music than talk about music, Carter has maintained a life of

writing, playing, arranging, and writing lyrics. Is it important for him to keep up a balance of activities? "Keeping a balance has to do with whatever is happening at a particular moment. Between writing, playing, arranging—I don't have any particular great preference. I just like to be involved in the music business," he chuckles at the understated simplicity of the statement.

Carter is in a rare position, as one who has worked in music steadily for over 60 years and absorbed—as well as influenced—the flow and flux of musical

styles. Has he made any conscious efforts over the years to tap into what was going on around him in the scene? "I just play as I feel at the moment. Maybe these things have probably affected me subliminally. If you listen to music, you can't help but have some of it rub off onto you."

As jazz developed over the decades, was there a point where he felt alienated from what was going on—say, in the '60s and '70s?

"Never, never, never. It's all music."

Miles Davis, who played in Carter's band in the mid-'40s, has contributed to the current Carter lore with the oft-cited, superlative quote: "Everyone should listen to Benny Carter. He's a whole musical education." But don't expect reciprocal hosannas. Did Carter have any sense then that Miles had something special, that he would go on to such heights?

"He was different. He had something. I didn't know it was going to grow as big as it did, and he don't either." End of subject. One thing he does share with Miles is an emphasis on letting the music speak for itself.

Carter began his musical life as a trumpeter before switching to the sax, and he thinks about adding it back to his full palette of musical tasks. "I may pick it up again one day, if I can get enough time to practice. These days, I very rarely practice, just a few days before I perform. It's not to keep the chops up, but to get them up," he laughs.

Longevity does not preclude forward motion, and Carter has mustered up a surprising creative momentum in his golden years, albeit in his quiet, unassuming way. Rather than resting on laurels and knocking out albums of idle blowing, virtually each new album comes with a new conceptual spin. Does he have a slate of projects, a master plan for future projects? "No, indeed. A friend of mine who is in his 80s says he doesn't even buy a green banana anymore," Carter laughs. "That tells you something."

Retirement is a notion that Carter has never entertained—not at all, not for a moment. "Thank goodness that, while doing something we love, we're also able to provide ourselves and our family with a decent living. I've been very fortunate."

**CARTER'S GEAR:** Carter plays a Selmer Mark VI sax, and uses an Arnold Brillhart mouthpiece. 

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# LIVE!

## Either/Orchestra: 10th Anniversary Concert

SOMERVILLE, MA

**E**ither/Orchestra has earned its dubious reputation on judicious juxtaposition of opposites: the naughty nonet blows too in for outcats, too out for fygges; its book harbors tunes by Miles Davis and Bob Dylan, Bobbie Gentry, Jimi Hendrix, and many band members, Sun Ra and Frank Loesser; it zigs when it might zag. E/O pitches ecumenism as its extreme function, working such large dollops of gutsy funk, hairy "aah" music, and howling rock into its slightly disrespectful neo-big-band mix that it might better term itself "Both/And-chestra." Thus it stood to reason that the band's Decade One retrospective—thrown in a revived neighborhood theater, complete with proscenium, porcelain pissoids and popcorn—pitch a few sliders (in/out curves by atypical singers) and toss in three-man sections (bass, bass clarinet) with its kitchen sink. Yes, E/O's big 1-0 recalled 24 members, alums, guests, 350 vociferous fans, and wives, and rarely did we forget that the main agenda was the *aggravamento* of great jazz literature into modern vernacular.

If raggedly under-rehearsed in ensemble, E/O's had beeced-up sections (2, 4, 6, with musical chairs for rhythm) to rip the roof off at high points like the gripping half-closing segue of Fripp's "Red," with searing electric guitar by John Dirac, and Duke Ellington's "Blues for New Orleans." Post-break covers of Mingus' "Moanin'," hammer-tongued haritone saxes courtesy of Charlie Kohlase and Steve Norton, and Sun Ra's "Planet Earth" camel-walked out fine solos by powered-up reeds; composers showed well via vibonist Curtis Hasselbring's post-matriculatory "The Brunt," bassist Bob Nieske's nicely-wrapped "2, 3, 6, 8" and reedman Andy d'Angelo's horns-only, rare-air "Kudzu."

For vocal distraction, Mark Sandman, smooth voice of Morphine, sang his louche, repetitive "Rub It In," Judy Kuhn, sweet film voice of Disney's *Pocahontas*, cooed



Either/Orchestra

an artsy "There Is No Music," they came improbably for a "Baby, It's Cold Out-

side" that, after the intro, never made us think of the Carter/Charles bout. Solo honors go to piano/DX7/ B3-mates John Medeski, Chris Taylor, and Ken Freundlich; "air" drummer Matt Wilson; mainstay trumpeter, Tom Halter. Leader Russ Gershon's urbane emceeing, loose conducting and beamish presence kept right things happening for this magic, hardworking band. —Fred Bouchard



CHJB leader Jon Faddis

### Carnegie Hall Jazz Band

CARNEGIE HALL, NEW YORK CITY

**T**he Carnegie Hall Jazz Band's concert, dedicated to the music of Cole Porter and Irving Berlin, began with an overture by Jim McNeely that worked in parts of themes from both composers in a kaleidoscopic manner which used the solo voices of alto men Dick Oatts and Jerry Dod-

gion, trumpeters Jon Faddis and Randy Brecker; and trombonist Slide Hampton. There were also effective arrangements from Mike Abene and Jimmy Heath. Marsalis was featured in "Dream Dancing" and a particularly tender duet with the empathetic guitarist of Howard Alden on "Everytime We Say Goodbye."

Roy Haynes led his quintet during a segment in the second half of the concert as the band laid out. He was in crackling form and had solo fire power from his son Graham on cor-

net; Donald Harrison on alto sax; and Darrell Grant on piano. Leader Faddis scored with a sensitive rendition on an Abene arrangement of "Supertime," a song by Berlin written at a time when Irving was in a Gershwin-esque groove. Perhaps the most important thing about the concert to me, not having been to Carnegie Hall in a while, is that they have finally seemed to have restored good sound to the venerable auditorium. It's been a long wait but what a relief.

—*Ira Gitler*

## Chico O'Farrill

ALICE TULLY HALL, NEW YORK CITY

The concert scene was busy in the late fall with both Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall presenting interesting programs. A common denominator between the two events was Wynton Marsalis, who seems to be everywhere on the New York scene these days. At Alice Tully Hall, he soloed on "Trumpet Fantasy," written for him by Chico O'Farrill, the man of the evening. For O'Farrill, whose CD *Pure Emotion* on the Milestone label has gathered many positive reviews, this was a long overdue time in the limelight. His orchestra played his compositions and arrangements from the album including his inventive chart of "La Cucaracha," which takes the Mexican warhorse through many permutations, thematic and rhythmic.

Chico's "Planitis" began with a slow, moody theme, redolent of a movie theme, perhaps a *film noir*. Then the tempo moved up for an impressive display of right-handed finger-bopping by Chico's son, Arturo, Jr. Another outstanding soloist during the evening was trumpeter Michael Mossman, beginning with the opening number of the minor-key "Igor" (not named for Stravinsky, but O'Farrill's white Persian cat), where the two *congueros*, Candido and Jerry Gonzales, supplied added power to that of Steve Berrios on the jazz traps, and Mario Rivera chipped in with flute on the theme and soprano sax in the wild coda.

Mossman was also noticeable, loud, high and clear in "Undercurrent Blues," which O'Farrill wrote for Benny Goodman in 1949. He should have been featured in a reprise of "The Afro-Cuban Jazz Suite," which featured Charlie Parker, Flip Phillips and Buddy Rich with Machito's band in its original recording. Mossman would have been a better choice than the trumpeter, who was assigned the solo; and Bobby Porcelli would have been more appropriate than Joe Ford for the alto sax spot.

The concert reemphasized O'Farrill's skills as a composer, orchestrator and leader; and his rare ability to combine two related idioms in a completely personal way. —*Ira Gitler*



This master keyboardist follows-up an album of incisive jazz funk (*Did You Feel That?*), a set of lavishly orchestrated mood pieces (*Invitation*), a brilliant instrumental concept album (*Ashes To Ashes*), and a splendid collaboration with a slew of vocalists (*Spellbound*), by returning to an acoustic trio accompanied by some longtime musical compatriots.

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## ron CARTER

**B**assist Ron Carter was 27 when he joined Miles Davis in 1963. Together with saxophonist Wayne Shorter, pianist Herbie Hancock and drummer Tony Williams, Carter helped make jazz history as a member of Miles' second great quintet. After the quintet disbanded, he served as house bass player for Creed Taylor's CTI record label, beginning in about 1970. In the mid-'70s, he began performing as a soloist on the piccolo bass, although he never stopped being in demand as a sideman and session player. Considered by many to be the heir to Paul Chambers' legacy of unselfish rhythmic and harmonic support, Carter has appeared on too many classic jazz recordings to count. In recent years he has focused on his teaching duties at City College and on his newest passion, composing and arranging. His latest recording is *Mr. Bow Tie* (Blue Note).

Carter approached the interview with some apprehensiveness, which vanished as soon as the music started. Much in the style of his mentor, Miles Davis, the great bassist did not appear to hold anything back in his responses to the recordings I selected. —Greg Robinson

### 1. OSCAR PETTIFORD.

"Chant" (from *The Hawk Flies High*, OJC/Riverside). Coleman Hawkins, leader, tenor saxophone; Idrees Suliman, trumpet; J.J. Johnson, trombone; Hank Jones, composer, piano; Pettiford, bass; Jo Jones, drums. Recorded 1957.

**BEFORE** Sounds like J.J. Johnson, Idrees Suliman and Coleman Hawkins. I don't know the bass player yet. It sounds like George Duivier or Milt Hinton, slightly. George Duivier or Milt Hinton, but I can't really tell until he starts the solo. Tommy or Hank on piano? Sounds like Doug Watkins. I can't tell who it is.

**AFTER** Great solo. Of the same school, anyway.

**GR** Was Pettiford someone you listened to when you were coming up?

**RC** I didn't listen to any bass players when I was coming up. I listened to Cecil Payne, J.J. Johnson, people who had a sound that was different than everybody else's on the instrument. Not bass players specifically, no.

### 2. CHARLES MINGUS.

"Hora Decuhitus" (from *Mingus*, *Mingus*, *Mingus*, Impulse!). Mingus, composer, bass; Walter Perkins,

drums; Richard Williams, trumpet; Eric Dolphy, alto saxophone; Booker Ervin, tenor saxophone; Jerome Richardson, baritone saxophone. Recorded 1963.

**BEFORE** It's hard because the pitch is so terrible in the band. The intonation is terrible! You can't tell if the chord's right, you can't tell if it's major or minor, or determine the root. This is hard to listen to because the pitch is so terrible. Booker Ervin, Pepper Adams. It's the Mingus band. Dannie was the whole band. Whatever they did, he was really responsible. Mingus gave him instructions, but if Dannie had been unable to follow them or make them work, the band would have sounded rather average. The band worked because of Dannie Richmond. That's Eric Dolphy, Richard Williams.

**AFTER** You know, Mingus didn't play bass lines *per se*. He played lines, but they weren't necessarily changes. It would be like a second baritone part or something like that. I play his notes sometimes, and his lines. They might not be the changes of the tune, but they'd make a great baritone part if you were to write it that way. Especially in this tune, it's not a real bass line. It's like a baritone part.

**GR** What would constitute more of a bass line?

**RC** Some notes that spell out the chord. You can take it off now, I've had enough. It's what it is, and it's good. Richard Williams was a good player. "Notes" we used to call him. He was nicknamed "Notes" because he played so many notes.

### 3. BUSTER WILLIAMS.

"Loss" (from *Outpost*, ECM). Eric Dolphy, composer; Freddie Hubbard, leader, trumpet; Kenny Barron, piano; Williams, bass; Al Foster, drums. Recorded 1981.

**BEFORE** Sounds like Kenny Barron playing piano. That sounds like Freddie Hubbard. Is that Buster playing bass? The drummer sounds like Ben Riley, but he plays a little different than Ben does. I can't think of the drummer.

**AFTER** You never hear Buster's name anymore. All the ink that gets spread around, and now you've got all these new guys. How can they overlook how well he plays? What happened to his name? What happened to the reputation he had worked for? What happened to the acclaim he deserved after all this time? What

happened to it? Who determines who the focus is? He has certainly played a long time, and worked hard to get to a certain level of performance. When is he going to get some acknowledgment, besides from me?

#### 4. DWAYNE DOLPHIN.

"Softly as in a Morning Sunrise" (from *Back To Basics! Sampler*, Minor Music). Sigmund Romberg, composer; Dolphin, leader, bass; Ravi Coltrane, tenor saxophone; Roger Humphries, drums. Recorded ca. 1994.

**BEFORE:** This is the kind of tune where you all sound uncertain that you really know it, and you play the melody, and no one knows it. The saxophone player really hasn't played the bridge right yet, and the bass player hasn't played the melody right yet, and no one's playing the changes. This is as close to "Softly as in a Morning Sunrise" as they're going to get, but they're not in the right area code. You don't have a piano. Somebody's responsible for the changes. You can't play a C-seventh for the last bar of the tune—it's a

C minor. The intent is okay, but none of these guys seem to have enough commitment to playing harmony to make a tune like this work with no chordal instrument. It's not William Parker or somebody like that, is it?

**AFTER** Oh yeah, I know Dwayne. He plays melodies better than that—maybe this was an off day and I couldn't appreciate that. But he should play the tune and the changes right, because it's not really close. He's a good writer. He writes good tunes. I've heard him play a couple times in New York. I'm surprised he didn't play the melody any better than that. If it's a C-minor, how can you play C, E natural, and G on the last chord of the tune? Unless you've set it up two choruses before, it's a wrong note. He's playing better, Ravi. I heard him play a few months ago. He's playing better and better now. He's going to be a wonderful player.

#### 5. BILL LEE.

"Nola" (from *She's Gotta Have It* Original Motion Picture Soundtrack, Antilles). Lee, composer, leader, bass; Stanley Cowell, piano; Kenny Washington, drums; Ronnie Dyson, vocals. Recorded 1985.

**BEFORE** I have no idea who this is. My comment on the sound is that there's no bottom to the record. All you hear are the drums, cymbals and high hat. You hear almost no bass drum, you hear the bass player's not playing any long notes. The piano player is playing from the "w" in "Steinway" on up. It just doesn't have any bottom. It sounds like it's midrange on up. I don't know whether they mixed it like that, or if the musicians actually played no notes below open D. It just doesn't sound like there's any weight to the record. You have to go to your set and adjust the knobs to add some artificial bottom to it. It sounds like *Music Minus One*. No one is really taking charge of the record. The singer is singing, but there's a voice missing. He sounds like he's not responsible for anything except singing some lyrics. This is hard music to make work, if there's not a commitment from someone. I have no idea who it is.

**AFTER** Bill's a wonderful writer. Great harmonic sense. There's just no

## Justin Time for Spring

### Oliver Jones - From Lush To Lively

Pianist Oliver Jones, now recording is a gem. This ambitious recording teams him with some of Canada's best musicians, in a Big Band setting as well as with strings. Arranged and conducted by Rick Wilkins. The album features four Oscar Peterson compositions, three of which are premieres, as well as Oliver's own compositions and some standards, such as "Swinging On A Star".



### Johnny O'Neal - On The Montreal Scene

Johnny O'Neal is back on the scene with an excellent new recording. This exceptionally talented pianist and singer has been called "one of the best-kept, undiscovered secrets of jazz" (London Journal), and has been hailed by critics the world over for his engaging style. Influenced most by Art Tatum, Hank Jones, Oscar Peterson and Errol Garner, O'Neal got his start from the likes of Clark Terry and later Art Blakey, with whom he toured and recorded extensively.

### Chet Baker - The Rising Sun Collection

This wonderful recording, now available for the first time, is released with the kind permission of the artist's family. Includes Miles Davis' "Milestones", Cole Porter's "Love For Sale" and three other tracks, featuring two with vocals. Other titles in the Rising Sun Collection include never-before-released recordings from Nina Simone, John Lee Hooker, Lightnin' Hopkins, Taj Mahal and others.



### Kenny Wheeler Quintet - 1976

Kenny Wheeler is among the very best of living trumpet and flugelhorn players. Just A Memory is pleased to present this important 1976 recording, originally issued (but never commercially) by Radio Canada International. Recorded in Toronto, this recording features Art Elfeffson, Gary Williamson, Dave Young and Marty Morrell. In Wheeler's discography, this places the session between the ECM recordings "Gnu High" and "Deer Wan".



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Continues on page 118





## Jazz: Photographs of the Masters

by Jacques Lowe  
with essays by Bob Blumenthal

(252 PP. ARTISAN PRESS, \$40.00)

Even with unlimited time and mobility, it would remain a virtually impossible dream, as Lowe himself put it, to photograph every "important jazz musician working today." Such an attempt wasn't out of character, though, for JFK's own chosen White House photographer, who imbues these more recent subjects with the same loving glow he gave to the participants of Kennedy's in-house Camelot, and, given the two years (1992-'94) he devoted to this quest—basically on speculation—the resulting 245 portraits are a worthy accomplishment.

Everyone will have his or her own list of the should-have-been-included, but it is fair to say that between the opening shot of Benny Carter and the final frame of Bill Frisell, Lowe caught up with a healthily wide range of jazz practitioners, primarily luminaries, with some dimmer hulks along for the ride.

Lowe's predominant style is close-up portraiture, ably using available light, conveying a comfortable intimacy between subject and shooter, yielding images that evidence an active cooperation in determining how the picture would be built. Especially pleasing in this regard are the likenesses of Randy Weston and Stephane Grappelli. Easily taking the cake for "Best in Show" is the photograph of George Shearing, in his trademark sunglasses, grinning as his hand explores a realistic, life-sized bust of himself, a rendering sculpted *without* the shades.

Boston writer Bob Blumenthal's five section-opening essays are top-notch work, especially welcome in the currently polarized climate, going, as they do, against the axe-grinding grain. His wide-angle view on jazz history as a living, evolving process takes a much more "and/also" approach than any tunnel-visioned "either/or" (militants of any stripe are seekers with impaired vision) highly informative with no exclusionary agenda. One can hope that the MacArthur Foundation will eventually notice him too.

Less worthy in too many cases are the biographies which accompany each photograph, not written by Blumenthal, minimally rehashing the subjects' current presskits. This makes for a volume with greater visual than verbal value *vis à vis* particular personalities as well as causing Blumenthal's intelligence to shine even brighter in contrast. Yet this is a relatively small complaint, delivered only as a caveat for the neophyte who might consider those bios authoritative.

In terms of coffee-table real estate, this is an attractive property at a reasonable price. —*W. Patrick Hinely*



## For Jazz

by Peter McSloy

(55 PP., HIT AND RUN PRESS, CLOTH \$20. PB. \$10.00)

This is probably the first time sonnets have conveyed a passion for jazz—and jazzmen.

Traditionally, the sonnet is a poetic expression of love. Within 14 lines it tells a complete story—like the rigid 17-syllable Japanese Haiku poetry, or the simplistic 12-bar blues.

Sonneteer McSloy, nimbly using distinctive syllables rhythmically to show admiration for his subjects, creates poems that combine keen insight and perceptive observation. Each is accompanied by artist Nina Mera's discerning linoleum-cut impression of the musician.

Peter McSloy is a pseudonym for Pete Townsend who, in his other life, plays guitar with The Who. He is a sensitive jazz musician—a fact that is evident from these devoted poetic tributes to his heroes. Artist Nina Mera is a student of jazz as well, and has performed as a vocalist and bassist.

A leather-bound version of *For Jazz*, autographed by poet and author, and a limited edition of 50 boxed sets of Nina Mera's illustrations, are also available. —*Floyd Levin*

## Afropop: An Illustrated Guide to Contemporary African Music

by Sean Barlow  
and Banning Eyre

(30 PP. CHARTWELL BOOKS, \$10.98)

Written by a couple of specialists in African music, this large-format book is abundantly illustrated with striking color photographs by Jack Vartoogian.

Africa is a big continent of many races, nations and musics. The impact of American idioms, including jazz, has been considerable, but the reverse of that impact via the so-called "world music" on jazz will make this well-planned introductory volume of much interest to many. Names like Dollar Brand, Miriam Makeba, Hugh Masekela and Manu Dibango are familiar here and in Europe, but there are evidently countries from which access to the West is still difficult.

Appendices devoted to discography, bibliography, a "directory of resources," and a glossary of musical terms add to the book's usefulness.

—*Frank Challis*

## Desert Sands: Recordings and Performances of Stuff Smith

by Anthony Barnett

(352 PP., ALLARDY CE BOOK, ENGLAND, VIA  
CADENCE, REDWOOD, NY, \$60.00, W / CASSETTE)

Stuff Smith was to the violin very much what Charlie Christian was to the guitar, but until now he has never had a comparable champion. Christian benefited enormously from John Hammond's support and the association with Benny Goodman. Anthony Barnett appears to be conducting a kind of one-man crusade on behalf of jazz violinists, his *Fable Bulletins of Violin Improvisation Studies* having so far dealt with Eddie South, Ray Perry, Ginger Smock, Juice Wilson, Emilio Caceres and Al Duffy. But Stuff Smith has very properly been his main concern. Before this massive volume, he had published *Pure in Heart*, a monograph (about \$13.00) that contained Timme Rosenkrantz's 1963 interview, Stuff's hilarious "That's the Story of Love," and an "autobiographical fragment" with Eva

Logager titled "The Human Side of Jazz."

*Desert Sands* is an absolute treasure chest of information. In many respects it resembles Klaus Stratemann's *Duke Ellington Day by Day*, another monumental European source book. After an enlightening chapter by Stuff's fourth wife, Arlene, there is a 200-page section of bio-discography illustrated with photographs and reproductions of flyers and ads. Appendices are concerned with checklists of Stuff's compositions, tributes to him by other musicians, 25 pages of transcriptions and indices of record-session associates and titles recorded. A cassette of broadcasts in 1936-'45 valuably supplements the text, although it is a sobering reminder of what little justice has been done this artist on his own country's reissue CDs.

Stuff's career is well documented by Barnett in terms of concerts, broadcasts, record dates, etc. His impish personality emerges in the stories and anecdotes told by friends and musical colleagues. There were few of the latter who did not acknowledge him as king of jazz violin, even those whose background entailed

an awareness of the instrument's long classical tradition. Jo Jones summed up his achievement best when telling John S. Wilson how Stuff was "the cat who took the apron strings off the fiddle."

—Stanley Dance

## Death of a Tenor Man

by Bill Moody

(236 PP., WALKER, \$21.95)

Bill Moody sets his pianist and amateur sleuth, Evan Horne, the task of solving the mystery of Wardell Gray's death in 1955, 37 years after it happened. The sleaze and glitz of the Las Vegas background are well portrayed as the investigation proceeds. Although no definitive solution is arrived at, clues and deductions suggest that the tenor man's fate may have been determined by more factors than drug addiction alone.

Written throughout in the present tense, the story has convincing immediacy, good characterization and relevant jazz coloring.

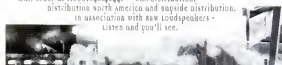
—Frank Challis



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## RECOMMENDED JAZZ STUDIES

By David Franklin

### Setting Standards: Jerry Bergonzi Solos Transcribed by Miles Osland

(64 PP., DORN PUBLICATIONS)

**N**ine excellent transcriptions of improvisations by an outstanding tenor saxophone soloist accompanied by Bergonzi's own short commentary on each and brief technical descriptions by the editor. A discography for the tunes is also included.

### Jazz Piano Voicing Skills: A Method for Individual or Class Study By Dan Haerle

(153 PP., JAMEY AEBERSOLD JAZZ, \$15.00)

**A** textbook for jazz piano classes or for individual study. Includes an instructional schedule and a suggested grading scale. The author is a well-known pianist/composer on the faculty of the University of North Texas.

### The Chord Voicing Handbook

By Matt Harris and Jeff Jarvis  
(138 PP., KENDOR MUSIC, \$19.95)

**N**ot intended as a systematic textbook, but rather as a reference work on how to voice particular chords, especially the less familiar ones, this clearly-written handbook could be of great use to students, school jazz ensemble directors, composers and arrangers.

### Lessons with the Greats

Produced and co-written  
by John Xepoleas

(71 PP., MANHATTAN MUSIC/CPP MEDIA, \$22.95)

**U**.C. Berkeley staff member, clinician and teacher John Xepoleas compiled this collection of three "lessons" each with Dave Weckl, Steve Smith, Terry Bozzio, Kenny Aronoff, Gregg Bissonette and Peter Erskine. The author's own contribution is the shortest, at six pages, Steve Smith's the

longest (11 pages), while Weckl and Bozzio take up ten each. The Weckl section is very hip (I've already used this book with some of my students); predictably, the Bozzio section is the most technical and the Erskine section the most conceptual. But personally, I have a problem with a book presenting "the world's greatest drummers" featuring exclusively white faces staring out from its cover.

—Jim Miller

### Drumming: The Forest and the Trees By Martin Bradfield

(115 PP., MARTIN BRADFIELD)

**H**ere is a very unusual "drum book" in that only five pages contain any music notation whatsoever... it is more an insight into the mind of its author, and a philosophical treatise on how he has come to look at such things as conversational interaction on the bandstand, individual creative self-expression, the accompanying nature of drums, developing your own sound and style, independence and the rudiments, with plenty of personal anecdotes and references to Philly Joe Jones (with whom the author studied) and Elvin Jones, among others.

—Jim Miller

### Practical Applications Using Afro-Caribbean Rhythms (Part 3)

by Chuck Silverman

(64 PP., CPP/BELWIN, INC., \$21.95 W/  
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—Jim Miller

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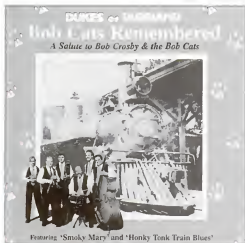
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| 10         | Flagler Beach, FL                    | September 4 | Everett, WA                        |
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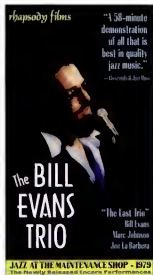
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## RL's Dream

By *Walter Mosley*  
(272 PP., NORTON, \$22.00)

**R**L's Dream represents a departure for Mosley, best known for his Easy Rawlins mysteries. Here he has written a novel about the blues in which the presiding spirit is none other than the legendary Robert Johnson. The novel tells the story of an unlikely friendship between Soupspoon Wise, an old bluesman, and Kiki, the younger red-headed woman from Arkansas who saves him from eviction and fakes an insurance policy to get him the medical attention he desperately needs. The novel shifts between New York City, where the two presently live, and the Southern past that weighs heavily on both. For Kiki the past is a nightmare of sexual abuse. For Soupspoon it is his former life as an itinerant bluesman. Mosley is particularly good at evoking the Mississippi Delta where Soupspoon grew up, learned how to play the guitar, and eventually became a sideman to blues great Robert Johnson, nicknamed RL here. "For all that it was barren, the Delta was a beautiful land too. It was a hard land but true. It had the whippoorwill and the hoot owl and crickets for music. It had pale dead trees that stood out in the moonlight like the hands of dead men reaching out of the ground. And the Delta smelled of sweet earth and jasmine and magnolia." Blues lyrics abound and there's plenty of musical reverie: "Now he was alone in the big purple bed. His head full of dreams about catfish frying and juke joint dancing and women laughing open-mouthed while he played his red guitar." Yet, for this reader, the blues never really come to life in these pages. Some scenes have a sketchy, improvised feel. They aren't marked by the inevitable. However, Soupspoon's final hours are moving and well wrought, and ultimately, Soupspoon, Kiki and Mavis, Soupspoon's ex-wife, prove to be memorable characters.

—Marcela Breton ■



## Bill Evans

*The Bill Evans Trio:  
Live at the Maintenance Shop*

RHAPSODY FILMS 9034 (58 MINS)

## Dexter Gordon

*The Dexter Gordon Quartet:  
Live at the Maintenance Shop*

RHAPSODY FILMS 9035 (54 MINS)

## Charlie Byrd/Herb Ellis/Barney Kessel

*Great Guitarists:  
Live at the Maintenance Shop*

RHAPSODY FILMS 9036 (54 MINS)

## Phil Woods

*The Phil Woods Quartet:  
Live at the Maintenance Shop*

RHAPSODY FILMS 9037 (54 MINS)

Since there's bound to be some confusion with Shanachie Entertainment's *Jazz at the Maintenance Shop* series, let it first be said that Rhapsody's just-issued *Jazz at the Maintenance Shop* consists exclusively of previously unreleased material. The source for both Shanachie and Rhapsody sets is the 1979 *Jazz at the Maintenance Shop* series produced by Iowa State University for the nation's Public Broadcasting Service.

In each tape the music comes first.

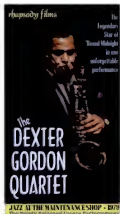
Director John Beyer, the Louis Malle of jazz performance videos, uses a camera and cutting style that like the classical Hollywood cinema of the 1930s-'50s tends toward invisibility. No MTV hijinks here. So, although Beyer cuts freely between revealing closeups and medium shots, it's the drama of the unfolding music that provides the logic for cutting. As a result, the self-effacing editing strategy allows the music and its makers on *Jazz at the Maintenance Shop* videos to not only grab, but also sustain, our attention.

Dexter Gordon's 1979 quartet is a wonder. With pianist George Cables, bassist Rufus Reid and drummer Eddie Gladden, Gordon's tenor struts with a loping gait at once magisterial and tongue-in-cheek. In the romping blues, "Back Stairs," for example, we get sustained one-note quavers and quotes such as "Three Blind Mice," along with cascading sheets of sound. Throughout, one is reminded of the productive and symbiotic relationship between Gordon and Coltrane.

In the modal-contoured "Alone Together," with Gordon on soprano, the Coltrane-to-Gordon end of the link is most clear. It's the tenor, though, that was Gordon's meat and potatoes. And when Dex digs out of the bottom of his horn to fly into the stratosphere, it becomes evident why Coltrane always mentioned Gordon as one of his most profound influences. Especially memorable is the Scottish take on "It's You or No One" with the rhythm section's drone and Gordon's highland rendering of bagpipe motifs. Of all Gordon recordings, this is one of the best.

Indeed, after his mid-'70s homecoming, it was the Cables/Reid/Gladden rhythm section that proved most congenial to Gordon's laid back sense of time and quixotic phrasing. Here, in extended takes, we witness a hand that loved to play. And while propelling Gordon ever onward, when it's their turn, Cables, Reid and Gladden solo with an uncommon verve that serves both the group and the individual. Recorded just a year prior to his un-

timely death in 1980 at the age of 51, this testament to the unique powers of pianist Bill Evans shines brightly. Again, Beyer's camera brings us into the arena for revealing medium and closeup shots of Evans, bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Joe LaBarbera, a visual collage supporting and, elucidating the interactive processes giving rise to Evans' rarefied trio approach. As documented here, the Evans/Johnson/LaBarbera troupe was one of the pianist's top groups.



Here, Evans' repertoire includes standards such as "Someday My Prince Will Come" and "But Beautiful," originals like "34 Skidoo" and "Turn Out the Stars," plus surprises such as pop singer Bobbie Gentry's "Morning Glory." Whatever the springboard, one is struck by the depth of the trio's shared vision, the flowing and intertwined virtuosity of solo as well as ensemble episodes, and the careful attention paid to such details as dynamics. Evans, honest as always, in introducing Gary McFarland's "Gary's Theme" notes his displeasure with the piano. Still, what emerged is one of the prime documents of Evans' extensive oeuvre.

God bless Phil Woods, not only one of contemporary music's finest players, but one who's shunned the frills and fads of the "music business" to remain true to, for want of more felicitous phrasing,

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the "art" of music. Here, backed by his "acoustic" mates—pianist Mike Melillo, bassist Steve Gilmore and drummer Bill Goodwin—Woods weaves through the warp and woof of standards like "Body and Soul" and "Along Came Betty" as well as such originals as "Change Partners" with a swinging and bop-ish insistence recalling the prime-time Cannonball Adderley.

Here, in the cozy confines of the *Jazz at the Maintenance Shop* studio, Woods is able to soar sans microphone. It does make a difference. There's a level of intimate interaction that at times is just plain eerie. And, yes, everything can be heard clearly. Another treat concerns intonation. Indeed, in an era where playing in tune, especially among alto saxophonists, seems to have become marginalized as a European affect, Woods' razor-sharp intonation, from the bottom to the top of his horn, is startling. And while Parker remains one of Woods' touchstones, there are tips-of-the-hat to Hodges' rich vibrato as well as to the silky rhythm 'n' blues smears of Earl Bostic. In sum, a vibrant souvenir by contemporary jazz's premier alto saxophonist.

Featuring a front line of Charlie Byrd, Herb Ellis and Barney Kessel, plus bassist Joe Byrd and drummer Wayne Phillips, the Great Guitars are an imposing all-star group. And as the principals lace up the likes of "Undecided," "Seven Come Eleven" and "Lady Be Good," it's clear that Byrd, Ellis and Kessel constitute a bona fide mutual admiration society.

The format, though, does have limitations. Most critical is a textural sameness. Yes, Byrd does play acoustic, while Ellis and Kessel plug in. Still, one wishes for a bit more contrast. Another shortcoming is the group's decision to use an electric bassist. Yes, Joe is Charlie's brother as well as a competent player. But the electric bass' monotonous plunk-plunk-plunk has all the variety of a jackhammer (unless played by someone like Steve Swallow). So while the GGs spin out cheerful melodies, the music never really seems to dig beneath its pleasant surfaces.

—Chuck Berg

## Mundell Lowe

### *Creative Jazz Guitar Hot Licks*

VOL 101 (68 MINES)

Mundell Lowe is one of the great guitarists. Though largely unheralded because of a busy studio career (during the 1950s in New York with NBC; later, in Hollywood penning scores for films such as *Billy Jack*), Lowe has kept up the Charlie Christian-influenced style that brought him to post-war prominence with Ray McKinley, Mary Lou Williams, Red Norvo, Benny Goodman and the Salter-Finegan Orchestra. Currently on tour with André Previn's trio, Lowe has also backed legends such as Billie Holiday, Peggy Lee, Lester Young, Sarah Vaughan and Charlie Parker. Therefore, when he talks about the art of accompanying, one is compelled to listen.

With an easy going manner, Lowe also explains his approach to ii-V-I progressions, drop-D-tuning (taking the bottom E string down a full step), harmonizing the chromatic scale, creating a lyrical flow, Freddie Green rhythm comping and Joe Pass finger style. He's an engaging teacher whose points are doubly reinforced by persuasive demonstrations featuring Lowe, fellow guitarist Sal Salvador, bassist Phil Bowler and drummer Danny Gottlieb, and by a useful booklet of 23 notated examples keyed to the video. Demos include a full-blown quartet rendition of "You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To" and a spontaneous ballad based on the changes of "Polka Dots and Moonbeams." With Lowe's emphasis on composing (there's even a foray into 12-tone technique), this should be a challenging and useful tape for intermediate and advanced players.

—Chuck Berg

## Benny Carter

### *Symphony in Riffs*

RHAPSODY FILMS 0021 (38 MINES)

Initially released in 1989 when Carter was a spry 82 years young, director-producer Harrison Engle has captured

*Continues on page 120*

## Filling the Void

Yusuf Gandhi was a high school student in India when his brother brought home a Ramsey Lewis record. That fateful event led him on a lifetime obsession with jazz. "Actually it was very difficult getting jazz music in India in those days," he recalls. "But from listening to so much Indian classical music, jazz was something I could instantly relate to because of the element of improvisation. So when I heard that Ramsey Lewis record, I really liked it. That's what drew me to more jazz and I've been listening to jazz and collecting jazz records ever since."

In India, Gandhi got involved in the Yatra Festival during its initial stages. After arriving in New York, he formed a management company that represented Roy Ayers, Tom Browne and Noel Pointer. He was later hired by Famous Artists, which was then General Talent International, an agency involved in booking R&B acts. Now Gandhi heads up Hip-Bop Records, a contemporary jazz imprint of London-based Silva Screen Records.

"We started off five years ago as a movie soundtrack label," he explains. "In the beginning we had a good catalog. We recorded *Laurence Of Arabia* and *The Godfather*, using the same orchestration but much better recording techniques so it sounds much better. And when we launched five years ago, we also started a classical label, Silva Classics. Reynold daSilva, who owns Silva Screen Records in England, and I are old friends. And we're also both jazz fans. That was one of the things we always wanted to do...jazz...but we never came across something that really intrigued us until we received a demo from violinist Michael Urbaniak. We really liked the sound of that demo. It was fresh and reflected today's energy and how the music is evolving."

Urbaniak's *Urbanoator* became Hip-Bop's initial release in 1993. Since then they have released *More Jamaican Funk* by trumpeter Tom Browne and *Present Tense* by drummer Lenny White. Gandhi's latest pet project is another imprint called Hip-Bop Essence, which



Yusuf Gandhi, left, with Bob James during the rehearsal of *Afran Cubano Chant*

is devoted strictly to acoustic jazz. "Being from India, I feel that the government and a lot of the benevolent organizations in this country are not really doing too much for jazz," he says. "And that's really sad. I think all the labels should get together and start doing something so jazz comes back to the level it was. Our whole aim here is we're trying to speak to other labels to revive jazz in a bigger way than it is. And that is the main reason why we started this acoustic label."

Hip-Bop Essence specializes in thematic albums with a focus on acoustic jazz. Lenny White produced the first four releases, including a Horace Silver/Lee Morgan-styled funk project with saxophonists Craig Handy and Donald Harrison, bassist Ron Carter, pianist Billy Childs and White on drums, a blues and ballads vehicle for pianist Kenny Barron, a Freddie Hubbard tribute featuring trumpeters Wallace Roney, Marcus Belgrave and Eddie Henderson, and a Latin jazz project with saxophonist Gato Barbieri and pianist Bob James. The label's next offering will be a Hammond B-3 organ summit meeting between Joey DeFrancesco and Dr. Lonnie Smith with Grover Washington Jr. and Kenny Garrett on saxes and Idris Muhammad on drums.

"The best part of it is the musicians are coming to us now and wanting to be involved in these projects," says

Gandhi. "They are interested in our thematic concept and also in the way that we are recording them, which is straight to two-track so that it has that whole live feel, which is something that has been lacking in recent years."

Gandhi adds that his mission is "to develop Hip-

Bop as a contemporary label that addresses the changing of the times while also documenting straight-ahead acoustic jazz with Hip-Bop Essence."

—Bill Milkowski

## MONARCH RECORDS

## Developing Act

This has been an incredible year for me," Dmitri Matheny pronounced at the close of 1995, which found him sitting in a café by the dock of the Bay, on San Francisco's recently renovated Embarcadero. He was just about to walk over to Pier 3 and pick up the keys to the new offices of Monarch Records.

Monarch had not only released Matheny's first album as leader and flugelhornist, *Red Reflections*, but had hired him to pilot their business arrangements. And Matheny, on the verge of his 30th birthday, was retaining his job as director of corporate partnerships for the San Francisco Jazz Festival, which he'd helped to hook up with Citibank and to establish a scholarship to his alma mater, the Berklee College of Music.

Matheny had come to Monarch's founders, Steve and Ted Hall, with a plan for marketing his recent release which had impressed the financial

wizard siblings. They'd begun the label with the release of pianist Mark Little's *Dream Walkin'* two years earlier, and were looking to expand as an embarkation point for artists known and unknown.

For his part, Matheny was impressed with how the new label might stay afloat where other small Bay Area startups had been swamped. "Monarch reflects the same values as all those other wonderful small independent jazz labels," says Matheny, "in that they all recognized that there's this wealth of talent here on the West Coast, which is under-represented on the East Coast-centric major jazz labels. But the thing that separates Monarch is that the brothers are both very smart business people. They know that the downfall of those other labels was that they were undercapitalized, thinking that they'd be financially strong in a year or two, where it had taken Carl Jefferson 15 years to turn a profit with Concord. You have to build the catalog."

This Monarch has done with nine releases to date, with a diversity evoca-



Dmitri Matheny

tive of the Bay Area's. Aside from Little and Matheny, there have been offerings of Latin-tinged Guamanian pianist Patrick Palomo; a post-bop meeting of Sacramento trumpeter Tom Peron and local drummer, DJ, and recording engineer Bud Spangler with their former leader and pianist Jessica Williams; a contemporary album by saxophonist Alex Murzyn; and a recording captured at Yoshi's Nitespot in Oakland, featuring mainstream master Cedar Walton.

"Monarch has a very organic, live quality," Matheny believes. "Most of our recordings are recorded either live in concert or live in the studio, so that you'll always know if you go to hear these musicians, this is what they'll sound like. And we're choosing artists who don't use a lot of overdubbing and engineers and production people who are very experienced at doing this kind of thing." Included in the latter group are Orrin Keepnews, Frank Dougherty, Jim Edwards and Spangler.

"And the biggest thing is quality," Matheny continues. "We've noticed that a lot of labels will have one or two knockoffs, but we're painstaking about hiring excellent designers and artists to work on all our packaging."

On the homefront, Matheny's two employers are conferring on the possibility of recording San Francisco Jazz Festival performances for Monarch release. To ensure that the "West Coast sound" is heard on other coasts and in between, the label is helping its artists

*Continues on page 120*

# BROWNSTONE

## PAUL BROADNAX



Paul Broadnax, piano; vocals; Fred, alto/tenor sax; Mike Turk, harmonica; Dave Trefethen, guitar; Peter Konrims, bass; Peter Bodge, drums ...rich, supple voice recalls the sophisticated panache of Johnny Hartman...and on blues the more gritty Joe Williams. *Broadnax is compelling.*  
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by Hilarie Grey

Playing in the one-man orchestra fretboard-tapping, rhythm chord-swooping guitar technique, **Danny Heines** earns awe points for style alone. Add to the virtuoso skill an adventurous sense of rhythm and melody, and the result is *Vanishing Borders* (Silver Wave SD907 48:09), an engaging

DANNY HEINES *Vanishing Borders*

record which utilizes Heines' skills for textural as well as melodic purposes. Heines, who for the most part records his guitar parts without overdubbing, adds touches of additional arrangement as needed, such as light layers of percussion programming circling his melody on "Rodeo Carousel," vocal give-and-take with the effective Vicki Randle on "Faster Than Alone" and body-slap percussion on the bluesy "Kissing Lightning." These spartan arrangements contrast with *Borders'* biggest surprise, the expressive "A Piano Between Us," on which dark cello and meditative flugelhorn brace Heines' mournful melody. The unusual instrumental interplay recalls art-rock arrangements of the Kate Bush or Peter Gabriel variety. Heines is clearly an artist with more than textbook technique on his mind.

Relying far too much on repetitive, mid-tempo programmed grooves to build his hooks, saxophonist **Boney James** is likely to induce slumbers with *Seduction* (Warner Bros. 9 45913-2; 43:47). As on past efforts, much of

James' best work is relegated to the back-ground in a heavy-breathing R&B production style. When allowed to speak out, James' alto bustles and stutters effectively ("Camouflage"), and his soprano snakes about with a fullness not usually captured by the more fluttery players ("Ain't No Sunshine"). However, stylistics seem to be of greater concern here, with ornaments like the needless vocals on "Got it Goin' On" pulling focus. Producer Paul Brown even blands out Hall & Oates by adding a click track to "Sara Smile." *Seduction's* best cut is "Second Nature," which stands out with a rootsy, vital sound as James' scuttling tenor trades licks with Rick Braun's haunted flugelhorn over a Latin guitar flourish. Someday an entire album will focus on James' strengths, and we'll all be surprised.

Old habits are hard to break, shows guitarist **Steve Laury**, whose work on *Vineland Dreams* (CTI 67239-2; 54:07) illustrates the same easygoing pleasantness he created as a member of the band Fatburger. Songs like album opener "Gloria Ann" and "Cara Mia" are generally pretty, upbeat and undemanding. Others are somewhat

STEVE LAURY *Vineland Dreams*

sappy and over-synthetic, though Laury's stately guitar chords on a cover of the Jackson 5 hit "I'll Be There" render it hands-down preferable to the Mariah Carey version. The real surprises in this good-natured record are its outright jazzier pieces. An inventive and full read of Wes Montgomery's "Angel," and the soulful, "Route 66"-recalling gait of "The Man Beneath the Clouds" show that Laury's style may not be so unshakable after all.

The five-piece ensemble **Mindwalk** throws some well-timed curve balls at hard fusion on *\*we^n!* (CJ CD 9501; 41:27). Primary writer and guitarist Richy Stano's rock chops are on prominent display, searing through chord blocks on "Beyond Mere Pain," and blazing across the top of bouncing keyboards on the hokey "Beatles Gone Mad." However, these students of fusion timing augment their majestic stops and knuckle-hall chords with unexpected ele-

ments, like the far-Eastern keyboard progression backing the hard-rock edged "Bombermania," and subtle crescendos and drop-offs on guitar and piano on the subdued and slightly Latin "That's What I Want." "Jack's Guitar" lets its melody bleed through atmospheric, wobbling chords for an uneasy "sunrise" feel. *\*we^n!* is an intriguing debut for a risk-taking group.

GEORGE HOWARD *Attitude Adjustment*

There are two major roles played by saxophonist **George Howard** on his latest effort, *Attitude Adjustment* (GRP GRD-9839; 49:54); his signature lead as romantic balladeer, and a newer pose as a hip street tough. True to the laws of typecasting, Howard's fluttering graceful soprano works best within the gentler textures of anthemic ballads like "One Last Time" and "Our Love." Though boppier tracks set up some interesting rhythmic corners for Howard to navigate, his leads are mostly lost in posing background effects. Programmed grooves on

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"Best Friend" and "Attitude Adjustment" are numbingly repetitive. Happily, the most engaging track on *Attitude* is a stylistic departure from both modes—"Diana's Blues" boasts a springy, lively texture propelled by bouncing bass which gives Howard's soprano ample space to trip gleefully along. Forget the pseudo-street sound: this is the type of invention which can finally break Howard out of fluffy romance roles and into meatier character parts.

You may get the feeling that some sinister characters populate **Project Lo's** *Dabbings in Darkness* (LoLo LOLO 004-2; 54:13), an often experimental-sounding collection of atmospheric explorations. The duo of Bon Lozaga (on "acoustics") and Jim Loretangeli ("keytronics") create fully-realized moods—scapes—from the stylish and scary "The Way Home," zapping a thin piano line with waves of synth and sax to the mournful "Boji" pitting Lozaga's guitar against a sad wash of electronic strings. These sometimes fascinating *Dabbings* aren't for everyone, however. Patience is required for melodic emergence on pieces like the trippy, ever-changing "Three Rivers of Lore," though I could recommend the album solely because of "Sand," a captivating piece combining urgent, glistening keyboards and guitar with sorrowful, long-lined soprano sax—a vivid depiction of loss.

Guitarist **Jamie Findlay** invites listeners to experience the physical nuances of his acoustic guitar on *Wings of Light* (Acoustic Music 319 1076 2 42; 62:19), a gentle and sometimes majestically pretty recording so brightly produced that the metallic squeal of fingers sliding across strings leaps off your speakers. Each percussive echo can be felt on harmonically driven solo pieces like "Ascension Song" and "Valley of Love" which cascades from dissonant minor to melodic major, celebrating the instrument. Findlay also utilizes smart small-ensemble arrangements to lift his deep-strumming style on meditations like "Glad Tidings" and an unusual light trio read of "Body and Soul." Spatial dimensions like conga drums on the walking "Blues for Janny" and a softly brushed guitar line on the Brazil-beat back-grounded "Azaka's Nuge" show Find-

lay's ability to pull something special or unusual from a tried-and-true style.

Versatile violinist **Jerald Daemyon** adds nuance and intensity to an overdone formula on *Thinking About You* (GRP GRD-9829; 43:17). Daemyon's warm, swooping playing is the main attraction, offering glimmers of light to overbaked arrangements like a dragging rendition of the Stylistics' "You Make Me Feel Brand New," which is taken over by emotionless vocals. Cold grooves like "13" detract from the violinist's work, which is thankfully given greater focus on "Summer Madness." The best pieces diverge from the pop R&B formula—"Africa" allows Daemyon to step out as a rock ax wielder with a bow, pulling off intense octave jumping in a loping, percussive setting, while "Peace of Mind" finds him swinging with a waltzing piano. Either of these pieces would serve as great jumping off points for future efforts.

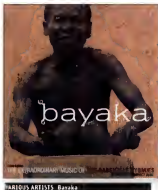
The spaces speak as loudly as the noises for the intense duo **Common Ground**. Their eponymously titled album (TMP 6304-2; 58:09) uses brisk, unusual timings and breaks on tracks like the rocking "Numerology" and swooping, swinging "Big Sky Country" to barrel through an eclectic range of styles. When saxophonist Chris Farr and guitarist Erik Sayles play in melodic parallels on the stuttering "Into Deep" and "Full Circle" the results are stunning, with only a tendency to overdo the keyboards occasionally getting in the way. Farr and Sayles also offer a few gems that will please those whose senses are deadened by knuckling fusion, like the moody, slow burning melody of "Quest" and "Rose Hall," which combines a creeping offbeat reggae rhythm with a staccato bop sax line for the album's best piece.

Just when you think you have guitarist **Eric Howard** figured out, he metamorphoses into something completely different. His *Animal* (Howard's Corner HCR 001; 63:40) is a hit-and-miss effort covering various styles—where some catch fire, others drift aimlessly. Howard's guitar work is graceful,

*Continues on page 107*

by Josef Woodard

It may be a gross understatement, but *Bayaka: the Extraordinary Music of the BaBenzele Pygmies* (Ellipsis Arts) is probably the most handsome package on the market dealing with pygmy culture ("bayaka" is the word used within



pygmy culture as a self-descriptor). A hardcover book, full of friendly color photography, with a CD inside, this may qualify as a coffee table ethnomusicology, an exotic gift item. Leave it to Ellipsis Arts, whose world music projects have helped make world music a more marketable commodity, with often intriguing effects. But who's complaining?

This album extends from a segment from the album *Echoes of the Forest*, drawing on the work of ethnomusicologist Louis Sarno, who has lived in Central Africa for several years, recording this unique culture. Dry, purist field recording is not the goal here. Recordings of remarkable vocal techniques, with looping phrases and yodeling effects, drumming, zither, and village rituals are matched, after the fact, with recordings of the jungle's sonic environment. Insects and birds make their own contributions to the whole, and the link between the pygmies' music and the ambient jungle sound palette is established. In the booklet, one photo of pygmies in the forest thicket has this quote scrawled across a two-page spread: "stay in the forest long enough

and the whole rest of the world will start to fade away." That's a suitable advice for those concerned with the preservation of native cultures, and a nice metaphor for those who turn to world music to find refuge from the world of wires.

Irish roots—especially musical ones—can run deep and be heedless of geography. It doesn't matter greatly that the two Celts making the robust music on *The Ring Sessions* (Phaeton/Rounder) hail presently from the U.S. Fiddler **James Kelley**, born in Dublin but now based in Miami, is a renowned Irish fiddlers working in a traditional vein. Guitarist **Zan McLeod** grew up in



Appalachia, ensconced in Scottish-Irish tradition there, and has worked in and out of Irish musical settings for decades. Together, the accomplished players headed to the area known as Ring in County Waterford to compile and record this solid survey of worn-in,

sweet and ruddy Irish tunes, as well as a few newer songs, sometimes with guest *bodhran* players adding to the fire. The result is warm and rough to the touch—sterility or polish would sanitize this folk music beyond recognition.

Crossing boundaries and mixing cultures can be risky or rewarding business. Just ask Enya, whose new age-waxing, reverb-splattered Celtic inventions have lately struck a remarkable commercial nerve.

Which is not at all to say that crossover is as dirty a word as some would have it: it just requires delicacy and discernment. Take the inspiring example of Hungarian vocalist **Marta Sebestyen**, who has contributed to such well-known culture-leaping projects as *Deep Forest*, and whose new album, *Kismet* (Hannibal) spans the globe, lovingly and with a lovely spirit. It's hard to get a workable fix on the album's musical core, jumping freely as it does from Eastern European to Celtic to Indian ideas, all new arrangemental spins on traditional music. The Indian sonorities of "Hindi Lullabye" segue, without a contextual skip, into the Celtic-waxing "The Shores of Loch Brann," modulating in

the middle for a piano interlude of "HazaFete" before returning to Irish soil.

Why does all this plain-faced pluralism work so well? It's partly to do with Sebestyen's pearly voice, strong and understated, and also the careful handiwork of producer/man-of-many-instruments, Nikola Parov. There is a cohesion within exploration here, a good example for others to follow.



The legacy of Indian classical music is being maintained, from various global outposts. Maitra is based out of Berlin. For many years, **Ali Akbar Khan**, the master *sarod* player, has made San Rafael, outside of San Francisco, his home base, heading up Ali Akbar Khan College of Music there. And, while some of Khan's recent albums have dipped, disappointingly, into the field of east-west crossover, the latest project, *Legacy* (AMMP/Trikoka), is one of the finest world music recordings of recent years.

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**NAIRD**

Fear not the all-drum project: a highly refined expression of both rhythm and melody are the basis of the compelling *Tabla Tarang—Melody on Drums*, new on the Smithsonian label. This release is significant in that it may introduce western audiences to the *tabla tarang*, a set of 16 tablas tuned to a two-octave range, which encircle—or engulf—the percussionist and allow for melodic playing. By the ancient standards of Indian classical tradition, the *tabla tarang* (tarang translates to “wave”) is a new phenomenon, traced back to only the late 1800’s.

By extension, the album also is a showcase for the revered master of the instrument, Pandit Kamalesh Maitra. Born in 1928, Maitra began playing the instrument in 1950 and has played the instrument with dance troupes, for film soundtracks and concert settings. On this unusual and engaging recording of four extended Ragas, Maitra is in good company, issuing the melodic waves underscored by the traditional tabla playing of Trilok Gurtu. Gurtu, best known in the west for his nimble east-meets-jazz sensibilities, first recorded with Maitra on Gurtu’s own CMP album *Sura*.

True to the title, Khan has chosen to perform Indian songs dating back to the 16th century, calling on India’s renowned film music icon Srimati Asha Bhosle—with whom he first worked in 1952, on the film *Aandhavan*—to sing them. Recorded, pristinely, at Skywalker Sound, the album is a collection of 11 songs, called *bandishes*, specific compositions featuring a vocalist, as opposed to the more improvisation-oriented medium of ragas. Khan, who was instrumental in bringing Hindustani music to the west, is considered a National Living Treasure in his homeland, and was the recipient of the MacArthur “Genius” grant in 1991. *Legacy* also features tabla player Swapan Chaudhuri, as well as cello, harmonium and sitar on a set of entrancing arrangements of music with a deep, long heritage.

On his official Real World debut, *New Moon*, Algerian vocalist **Abdéli** (a.k.a. Abderrahmane Abdéli) puts forward a strikingly unique world music

merger, seamless enough to fend off hints of hybridization until you stop to analyze the nature of the music. Abdéli’s foundation as a Kabyl traces the roots of his extended heritage, reaching back to the seminal North African Berber tribe, which, through a lateral branch, produced the Master Musicians of Joujouka. In his case, indigenous sounds seem to blend with South America and points eastward, to the Ukraine.

Even producer Thierry Van Roy’s occasional synth pads work towards an artistic end. Adding to the vibrational richness of the music is the simultaneous use of a western 12-tone scale and microtonal configurations. Through it all, Abdéli’s vocals are calmly substantial and subtly ornamental, passionate without ever resorting to histrionics.

Polystylistic threads also go into the fabric of Soukous, that hypnotic and dance-inducing form of Afropop which derives influences from Cuña and elsewhere.

Soukous kingpin, Zaïrean band-leader **Tabu Ley Rochereau**, has been at it for so long, you’d expect some attrition of energy. But Rochereau, and his group, l’orchestra afrisa international, is going stronger than ever, especially in terms of his presence in the west. The presence is also literal, having moved with his band to an archetypal bosom of America, to Anaheim, home of Disneyland.

*Africa Worldwide: 35th Anniversary Album* (Rounder) tells the story with the title. Recorded in a leaner, live way than his first Rounder album, *Muzina*, the album consists of tunes from Rochereau’s past few decades. The title cut, “Africa Mokili Mobimba,” was an anthemic hit during the early ’60s. This music is as enchanting as ever, with its loopy-riffling guitars, peculiar drum and bass grooves that lock in while twisting the beat, and horn parts that tell little melodic stories of their own. Atop all this, Rochereau’s deceptive simple melodies—often harmonized—squirm around the rhythmic machinery with a sensuous grace. All told, the group acts like a little musical village, to which the citizens are uncommonly devoted. ■

**G**uitarist **Monster Mike Welch** may be the Second Coming of Stevie Ray Vaughan. This 16-year-old guitar slinger from Boston has indeed copped a lot of SRV's trademark Strat work while also emulating the dynamics of Ronnie Earl, the toughness of Magic Sam and the intensity of Albert King. Hence the nickname, laid on him by Blues Brother Dan Aykroyd. But the Monster's attempts at singing on *These Blues Are Mine* (Tone-Cool 1154; ) fall painfully short of his fretboard abilities.



His raspy growl and slurred vocal delivery seem more affected than authentic and some of the lyrics are a bit hard to swallow. Like, what's a kid from Boston who doesn't even have a driver's license yet doing singing about his "Texas Girl"? Go figure. But dig those stinging, toe-curling licks on the two instrumentals, "Jessie's Blues" and "Leroy's Mood." And catch the wicked slide work on "Keep on Doin'" and "It Might Not Be Me." The kid definitely plays with a truckload of passion and attitude, and he's got tons of chops to back it up. From a lick-conscious point of view, this CD is thrilling. But the blues is more than licks. Purists may want to pass.

**Joe Guitar Hughes'** *Texas Guitar Slinger* (Bulseye Blues 9568; 60:41) would seem to be a misnomer. Yes, he's been a mainstay on the Houston blues scene since the mid '60s, but his guitar work sounds tepid by Monster Mike standards. Hughes' vocals are luke-

warm, if heartfelt, and his songwriting is formulaic and uninspired. Only on "A Blues Song," "My Baby Told Me" and "Moving to the Country" does he register any significant clicks on the blues-ometer.

**Chuck Carbo,** "The Voice of New Orleans," brings his mellow, regal baritone to bear on *The Barber's Blues* (Rounder 2140; 43:56). An all-star Crescent City band led by Edward Frank backs



CHUCK CARBO *The Barber's Blues*

Carbo on great tunes by the writing teams of Doc Pomus & Mac Rebennack ("Black Widow," "A World I Never Made" and the title track) and Jimmy & Jeannie Cheatham ("Too Many Goodbyes," "Don't Boogie With Your Black Drawers Off"). Carbo turns in soulful ballad performances of "I'd Rather Beg" and "The Very Thought of You," swings on a medley of Jay McShann's "Hootie Blues" and Memphis Slim's "Every Day I Have the Blues" and comes up

with a new Fat Tuesday theme in "Hey, Mardi Gras! (Here I Am)." One of the best of the year.

**Guitar Shorty** doesn't need to do flips with his axe or stand on his head to impress. He just likes to, that's all. On *Get Wise To Yourself* (Black Top 1126; 55:51), Shorty stings with typically aggressive Albert King-inspired guitar work on a set of good humored, hard driving funk and shuffle blues numbers like "I'm the Cleanup Man," "My Baby Loves to Do the Bump," "She's Built to Kill," "Ways of a Man" and the title track. There's a taste of New Orleans second line on "A Fool Who Wants to Stay" and Shorty showcases his killer slow blues chops on the lone instrumental "Smells Good." Indeed.

The vaults of record companies are teeming with vintage blues material ripe for reissue. It's no surprise then, in the midst of a mid-'90s blues boom to rival the mid-'60s blues boom, that archivists are having a field day compiling classic tracks for collectors and new fans alike. Prestige has wisely plumbed its own vaults in coming up with *The Bluesville Years*, an excellent four-volume set



HARDY ARTISTS *The Bluesville Years*

compiled and annotated by musicologist and author Samuel Charters that covers recordings from 1959 to 1964 originally released on its Bluesville imprint.

Volume one, *Big Blues Honks And Wails* (9905-2; 63:52) contains excellent performances by pianists Sunnyland Slim and Roosevelt Sykes, both featuring King Curtis on tenor sax. Vocalists Mildred Anderson and Al Smith are each showcased with Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis on tenor and Shirley Scott on organ. And Jimmy Witherspoon appears in separate sessions with Kenny Burrell and the legendary T-Bone Walker on guitar.

Volume two, *Feelin' Down on the South Side* (9906-2; 67:01) documents Chicago's incredibly rich blues scene, circa '63-'64, including performances by Otis Spann and James Cotton each backed by the Muddy Waters Blues Band, Billy Boy Arnold and Home-sick James.

Volume three, *Beale Street Get-Down* (9907-2;

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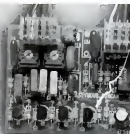
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67:38) focuses on Memphis fingerstyle guitarists Furry Lewis and Memphis Willie B. and pianist Memphis Slim. And volume four, *In the Key of Blues* (9908-2; 67:28) showcases great blues pianists such as Mercy Dee Walton, Curtis Jones and Little Brother Montgomery. Characters' liner notes in each volume are insightful and delivered with firsthand recollections of these original Bluesville sessions. And the music is as real-deal as it gets. The four discs sell individually but the entire set is a must for blues purists.

Lloyd Jones combines blues and sweet soul music in a most satisfying way on *Trouble Monkey* (AudioQuest 1037; 45:27). An accomplished songwriter and seasoned singer, Jones blends his economical, gritty guitar lines with punchy horn riffs, solid, syncopated backbeats, grooving B-3 organ and hip arrangements. Sessionmen Terry Evans and Ray Williams provide soulful vocal accompaniment on "I Broke My Baby's Heart," "I'll Be Laughing" and the ultra-funky title track. This one is more sophisticated, swinging and substantial than your basic shuffle band, reflecting the influences of Tower of Power, Booker T & The MGs, the Neville Brothers, The Meters, Dr. John, Sleepy John Estes, Snooks Eaglin and Dave Bartholomew throughout. That's some kinda tasty gumbo. ■

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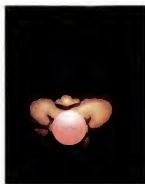
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# CHECKING OUT WHAT'S NEW AT NAMM COOL TOOLS

Josef Woodard



YAMAHA'S GRANTOUCH GT1

A not-so-delicate balance holds sway at the annual convention of the National Association of Music Merchants at the Anaheim Convention Center. By nature, the NAMM show is made up of unequal parts business, pleasure, music, technology and hype.

It's a fine place to check in on the evolution of the instrument market, which, at the moment, is seeing a sizable growth in computer wares, hard and soft, but also a continuing retrenchment towards timeless virtues. Yes, the ubiquitous Microsoft made its presence known, in an exhibition space downstairs, adding to the growing ranks of software merchants. The race to master the unruly art of guitar synthesizers has simmered, with only Roland

taking it very seriously anymore.

For the intents and purposes of strictly jazz-oriented visitors, the developments at NAMM are subtle, all about fine details over sweeping revolutions. Stalwart manufacturers such as Selmer and LeBlanc, as well as the exhibitors in the piano hall, have little interest in reshaping the wheel, but rest on well-built reputation for buildings things right. Meanwhile, L.A. Sax continues its line of saxes with flamboyant finishes, catering to the

contemporary jazz field. In the keyboard world, the search for the holy grail of a good piano sound in a portable package continues, as personified by the new Yamaha GranTouch GT1, with optical sensors guiding the keys and touch sensitivity.

Just when the merchandising and trend-watching at NAMM gets too dense, you bump into real time musical inspiration to remind you of the underlying force behind the ballyhoo.

This year, the best example of a profound musical refuge took place in the cramped quarters of Korg's performance space, where the new incarnation of the Zawinul Syndicate held forth. Zawinul may still be the best, and most atypical, proponent of electric



keyboards in a jazz context, this at a time when acoustic pianos rule the scene. Sitting behind his wrap-around command post of keys—Korg



keyboards, of course—he presided over a hot band, with drummer Paco Seri, bassist Matteo Garrison, guitarist Gary Paulson and percussionist Alex Acuna (filling in for Arto Tunçboyacıyan), Zawinul mixed effectively raw, alien accordion-like timbres, scruffy samples of esoteric radio broadcasts, and other unexpected sonic treats in a field too often ruled by numbers.

As an advocate for new uses for synths and samplers, he's a logical candidate for the NAMM show. At the same time, what he does is so personalized and unique—forget about factory sounds—that Zawinul does things one shouldn't try at home.

And speaking of tools of the trade, Zawinul was making use of two new Korg instruments. The Trinity work

station is a keyboard incorporating an 80,000-note, 16-track MIDI sequencer, and a PCM-

based tone generation system that operates at 48 kHz. On the leaner end, the new Prophecy, a small, monophonic soloing keyboard, harkens back to the days of the Mini-Moog.

This was a good year for jazz guitarists working just outside the mainstream, and for new jazz guitars, in general. Wayne Krantz, who played a set of smashing, thinking-person's fusion with his trio, defied the NAMM show ethics of showing off wares and swore by the basics—a road-battered Stratocaster and a Fender Deluxe. The nimble, urbane

#### THE KORG TRINITY

"straightahead" guitarist Pat Martino—back on the scene after health problems kept him away for too long—hunkered down for performances in the Parker booth, carving out his spindly lines on the unusually-contoured Parker guitar.

Parker has slowly been building up a good reputation for its remarkably lightweight instruments (6.5 pounds) that bridge the electro-acoustic realms



PARKER NITELYS

by including both DiMarzio magnetic pickups and a Fishman piezo-transducer in the bridge for a clean, acoustic-like tone. This year's model, the new Nitely, is a more affordable variation on the original custom model, with a bolt-on neck. At a list price of \$1,199, the Nitely is roughly half the price of the higher end instruments.

Two years ago, Samick made an exhibition splash with a new Robert Johnson guitar, ensconced in a salon of Johnson memorabilia. The fanfare was toned down this year, when they unveiled the Charlie Christian guitar, but, for a certain segment of the jazz guitar population, it was a humble showstopper. Proceeds from the sales go back to Christian's estate. Maurice Johnson,



GIBSON'S ES-336

from the D'Lecco guitar company in Oklahoma, had been aware of Samick's Johnson model and approached them about making a Christian model. "His name has been exploited," Johnson explained. "This gives his estate some just due, some recompense." The idea, Johnson explained, was to make a "production guitar and make it look like a hand-crafted guitar." Samick will make both a high-end model and a pared-down, more affordable S-15, running \$1,200.

At Ibanez, a new Pat Metheny model joined the roster of signature jazz instruments, which includes John Scofield and George Benson. A variation on the Gibson 175 model which Metheny has long used, the PM100 has a double cutaway for handy access to the 17-fret neck.

In the Gibson Custom booth, they showed the new ES-336, extending the 335 line. It features a slightly smaller body depth, a compound radius neck that tapers as you go up, and a narrow head stock, allowing for straight string pull—refinements on a classic.



In the drum and cymbal world, the trend of retracing roots was evident. Zildjian reintroduced its Swish K cymbal, a 22-inch cymbal with copper rivets made popular by big band drummers and also used during the fusion heyday of the '70s. Paiste, too, is looking backwards, issuing its "Signature" series of cymbals that hark back to the jazz and blues sounds of the '40s-'60s.

There are always many lessons to be gleaned from the sprawl of NAMM. When it comes to instruments in the line of jazz, the past, and its heroes, are in.

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Lawrence D.  
Butch Morris

## ◆ Testament:

## A Conduction Collection ◆

NEW WORLD/COUNTER CURRENTS (9/45/30)

While composer, conductor, and cornetist Lawrence D. "Butch" Morris is most widely known for a fruitful association with David Murray that stretches back to the '70s, the thrust of his own work for the past decade has been the development of *Conduction*, a sign and gesture based method of giving the conductor of large improvising ensembles greater creative flexibility. Since 1985, Morris has presided over 50 *Conductions*—Morris also uses the term for the resulting works, which employ notated materials as well as improvised elements. A bracing cross section of 15 *Conductions* performed by 13 different ensembles are included on the 10-CD *Testament: A Conduction Collection*, the most ambitious documentation of an evolving, cutting-edge music since Cecil Taylor *In Berlin '88* (FMP).

*Conduction* is a medium, not an aesthetic, Morris contends in his expansive notes included in the collection's 43-page booklet. As presented in the booklet's glossary of signs and gestures, Morris' vocabulary for "the new composer on the Podium" possesses enough of the procedural precision favored by experimentalists like Cage (a composer who fastidiously sought to prevent his tastes from entering his work) to give this heady proposition some credence. But, *Conduction* also requires the conductor to structure the work by quickly and accurately reading the emerging qualities of a performance, and directing the appropriate player(s) in the right direction (a trait shared by great jazz leaders from Ellington to Ra). Subsequently, despite being performed by vastly different ensembles—some integrate traditional musicians from Japan and Turkey; others are built around distinctive genre-bending units like Rova and the Maarten Altena Ensemble—the *Conductions* exude a common daring sensibility that is inescapably Morris'.

The players are the medium with which Morris action-paints sprawling, intense soundscapes. Occasionally,



Morris builds on a simple palette, like the tenet with seven string players on "Conduction #22." More often than not, there is a clash of colors, if not cultures. "Conduction #28" is performed by a 16-piece Japanese ensemble that combines traditional musicians, including *tagori shamisen* master Michihiro Sato, with an electric bassist and a turntable artist. On "Conduction #25" and "#26," the *oud* and *ney* virtuosi of Turkey's Suleyman Erguner Ensemble interface with such frequent *Conductees* as harpist Elizabeth Panzer, percussionist Le Quan Ninh, and J.A. Deane, who doubles on trombone and electronics. Morris also knows how to renew the vitality of long-standing ensembles ("#35" and "#36" stretch the already flexible Altena Ensemble) and tap established communities and networks of improvisers (respectively, the impressive Rova-organized Bay Area

Readers can hear portions from many of the recordings reviewed here by calling the Music Line. Look for this symbol ◆ at the end of a review for available recordings. then check the Index on page 90 for the code. ◆ represents a box set.

delegation on "#11" and the strong contingent of European free improvisers, including drummer Han Bennink, bassist Peter Kowald, and guitarist Hans Reichel, on "#31"). Still, some of Morris' most intriguing ensembles are assembled on his New York home turf. Particularly on "#39" and "#40," Morris is able to join loft jazz stalwarts like bassist Fred Hopkins and downtown noisemeisters like turntable artist Christian Marclay together to create a truly maverick music.

Ultimately, the issue of whether *Conduction* is a medium or an aesthetic must take a back seat to the plain fact that Butch Morris has made an important contribution to the cultural dialogue we call music. *Testament* is a limited edition; but, New World Counter Currents seems to have hedged its bet by packaging each CD as a potentially separate release. Hopefully, this music will remain available for years to come.

—Bill Shoemaker

Howard Alden, Frank  
Vignola & Jimmy Bruno

## Concord Jazz Collective ◆

CONCORD JAZZ 4672 (64/31)

Concord last did something like this more than 20 years ago with an ensemble billed as Great Guitars (Charlie Byrd, Herb Ellis, Barney Kessel). These three plectrists were all greatly influenced by those players, particularly Kessel. And so, the legacy of Charlie Christian continues into another generation.

The idea of harmonized unison lines is, of course, nothing new. Jimmy Giuffrè pioneered that tight ensemble sound back in 1947 in writing and arranging "Four Brothers" for the Woody Herman band. West Coast studio guitarist Tony Rizzi picked up on the con-



cept with his Five Guitars band and more recently Kenny Burrell has performed and recorded with his own guitar band. The Concord Jazz Guitar Collective adds to the tradition with intricate arrangements and three very distinct solo voices.

Philadelphia's Jimmy Bruno is the burner of this great trio. His fluid, exuberant lines bring a sense of hard bop drive to the group while Frank Vignola brings a wholly different texture to the group with acoustic guitar. Howard Alden, whose swinging style probably most resembles Kessel's, solos with an easygoing flair on these 12 tracks. Together they bring a fresh twist to classic fare such as "Body And Soul," "Perdido," Django Reinhardt's "Swing 39," Charlie Parker's "Ornithology," Bud Powell's "Strictly Confidential" and Tadd Dameron's "Mating Game." Fittingly, they also pull off smooth blowing, cleanly articulated versions of "Four Brothers" and "Seven Come Eleven," which incorporates an exact transcription of Charlie Christian's solo with the Benny Goodman band. Essential listening for guitar nuts. —Bill Milkowski

## Duke Ellington

### Live at the Whitney

IMPULSE! IMPD-173 (\$55.22)

His 1972 piano recital complements very well that of 1964 at the Wollman Auditorium issued last year on MusicMasters 01612-65122-2. The program is similarly a mix of the less familiar and the popular. In this case, there are "A Mural from Two Perspectives," "New World a Comin'," "Le Sucrier Velours," as well as "Mood Indigo," "Satin Doll" and "Sophisticated Lady."

It is interesting that the 1972 performance is rather more confident than that of 1964, when Ellington was far from convinced of the necessity or ad-

visability of such a recital. Here he is assisted by the two other regular members of his band's rhythm section—Joe Benjamin on bass and Rufus Jones on drums—of whom he was apt to be uncharacteristically and outspokenly critical. In 1964, he not only had his esteemed Sam Woodyard on hand, but also the support of his two best, piano-playing friends, Willie "The Lion" Smith and Billy Strayhorn.



The Whitney concert demonstrates once more the truth of what Earl Hines termed the difference between Ellington and most of the other jazz pianists—the fact that he was also a *composer*. (Hines' great admiration for Fats Waller had the same basis.) Yet he also recognized Ellington as the great "band" pianist he was. Without the band, there was not, of course, the same need for driving rhythm. This version of "The Shepherd" contrasts sharply with the two in *In the Uncommon Market* (Pablo PACD-2308-247-2), on which Ellington and Woodyard drive relentlessly for the benefit of Joan Miro, the great Spanish painter.

The contrast, too, between Ellington charming the socks off an audience, as here, and concentrated on the keyboard in the recording studio is also edifying. For the latter, *Piano Reflections* (Capitol 7 92863-2) is the essential, and someday, perhaps Sony/Columbia will reissue *Piano in the Foreground*.

—Stanley Donce

## Gonzalo Rubalcaba

### Imagine

BLUE NOTE BN 30491 (\$9.00)

Few would contest Cuba's prime role in the '30s and '40s in influencing the course of jazz's evolution. In the '70s, we were exposed to further Afro-Cuban developments when Irakere



hurst on the scene, and eventually Paquito d'Rivera and Arturo Sandoval emigrated. Now we're finding that the cultural richness of Havana's current generation has yet more surprises and delights. Gonzalo Rubalcaba, now barely 33, has shown world audiences from Montreux to Toronto to Tokyo his extraordinarily heady cocktail of Oscar Peterson and Bill Evans and Chopin, Chucho Valdes and McCoy Tyner and Franz Liszt. Now, thanks to his current residency in the Dominican Republic, he can show America.

This extraordinary concert, Rubalcaba's triumphant U.S. concert debut (Lincoln Center, 5/93) is high drama in ABCBABA form: A, exquisitely concentrated, introspective solos (Lennon's "Imagine," his "Circuito II" and "Mima"); B, a fiery Cuban quartet at points on his (largely solo) "Contagio," his musical godfather Dizzy Gillespie's "Woody'n You" and Alberto Dominguez's Cuban classic bolero "Perfidia"; C, a trio with Rubalcaba's long-time champion, bassist Charlie Haden and drummer Jack De Johnette playing glorious Haden's "First Song." The solo tracks are *de profundis*: pure, heartwarming, magnificent. The Cuban youngbloods await their cues and come in highly charged. The trio is exceptionally focused on this magnificent ballad—absolutely three equals.

Rubalcaba often achieves near-perfect balances of technique with musicality, tradition with adventure, heart with intellect. He is superb in studio, fabulous recorded live, and totally riveting—almost saintly—experienced live. People were scrambling to touch his cloak at UmbriaJazz '90 and Puerto Rico '95. Hear Rubalcaba and hear the future: a genuine jazz giant born not in, yet only 90 miles from, the U.S.A.

—Fred Bouchard

*Continues on page 74*

## Eric Dolphy

### ◆ The Complete Prestige Recordings

PRESTIGE PRCD-4118.2 (11/29/42)

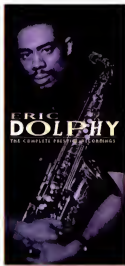
#### Vintage Dolphy

GM GM905CD (67/56)

History has not only treated Eric Dolphy favorably, it's actually done him some justice. We now have a clearer picture of his music than during the multi-instrumentalist's lifetime, due in large measure to the durability of his Prestige recordings, now collected in a well-appointed 9-CD box set, and posthumously released recordings such as the newly reissued *Vintage Dolphy*. The passage of time has allowed Dolphy's music to be assessed untainted by the early '60s "anti-jazz" hysteria. Triggered by high-profile, but arguably minor associations with Coleman and Coltrane, Dolphy was lumped in with the avant-garde in much the same way as pianist Andrew Hill, even though well-versed bop critics like Ira Gitler and Parker collaborators like Charles Mingus recognized Dolphy's Bird-rooted style. Certainly, recordings such as Coleman's *Free Jazz* and Coltrane's Village Vanguard sessions loom much larger in the historical big picture than the engaging Ken McIntyre and Oliver Nelson sessions included in the Prestige box; likewise, Dolphy's section duty on Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis' Prestige big band date is infinitely less informative about Dolphy's artistry than his solos on Gunther Schuller's "Variations on a Theme by Thelonious Monk" (a '62 concert version is featured on *Vintage Dolphy*); but, ultimately they were all just sideman gigs. When Dolphy's early Prestige dates are used to reference his relative proximity to the Parker legacy, not only do such later performances as his '63 Carnegie Recital Hall quartet concert (included on *Vintage Dolphy*) take on new gravity, but so does the historical proposition that Dolphy's work provides the necessary evolutionary continuity between Parker's sensibility (which thrived on Hindemith as well as the blues) and a wide spectrum of composer/improvis-

ers, including Anthony Braxton, Oliver Lake and James Newton.

On the surface, there's nothing particularly radical about Dolphy's April '60 debut as a leader, *Outward Bound*. At the helm of a quintet with the 22-year-old Freddie Hubbard and a veteran section featuring Jaki Byard and Roy Haynes, Dolphy plays it relatively safe, covering a recent Miles Davis hit, giv-



ing a Rodgers and Hart chestnut a tender reading, and tossing in a couple of blues to lighten the impact of his more daring originals, "G.W." and "Les." Yet, these unusually structured tunes are just as noteworthy for their shimmering bop-derived swing. Fronting a distinctive quartet showcasing Ron Carter's cello, Dolphy ostensibly retraced terrain he first surveyed in his tenures with Chico Hamilton and Mingus on his second album, *Out There*, recorded in August '60. Not only does Dolphy masterfully mesh the rich hues of the Hamilton-like instrumentation with the atmospherics of Mingus' "Eclipse," but incisively invokes Mingus' lyricism on the blues-hased "Serene." Again, several of Dolphy's originals have daunting structures. Compositionally, the title piece and "The Baron" (another nod to Mingus) presage Braxton more than echo Parker, but Haynes and Duvivier's sleek propulsion and the

smooth contours of Dolphy's solos (the former is one of his Birdiest alto flights; his bass clarinet on the latter is downright polite compared to his work on the Schuller piece) make the performances unimposing.

It has often been noted that Dolphy's next album, *Far Cry*, was recorded only hours after the *Free Jazz* session; but the real story of the last Dolphy-led Prestige studio date is the warmth of his bass clarinet on "It's Magic," the sumptuousness of his flute on Mal Waldron's pensive ballad, "Left Alone," and his utterly romantic unaccompanied alto on "Tenderly." For a guy allegedly under a heavy Ornette influence, it's a strikingly conservative set with only one new original, the ebullient "Miss Ann." Still, the session is rightfully considered a watershed as it is the first recorded pairing of Dolphy and trumpeter Booker Little, a musician whose creativity and discipline made him Dolphy's perfect front line partner. Six months later, Dolphy would participate in two sessions that would cement a bond between him and Waldron: Ron Carter's solid *Where?*, and the pianist's excellent *The Quest*. Traversing 5/4 blues, oddly hued modal ballads, and the ingeniously designed "Thirteen," in which a 13-note sequence undergoes several metamorphoses, Waldron's spirited sextet featuring Dolphy, Carter on cello, and tenor saxophonist Booker Ervin produced an inspired album that transcended the Prestige ad hoc session formula. Mere days after Waldron's date, Dolphy brought him, Little, bassist Richard Davis and drummer Ed Blackwell together for the legendary July '61 Five Spot engagement.

First issued as three separate LPs, the Five Spot recordings mark the pinnacle of Dolphy's Prestige output, catching him in mid-quantum leap as an improviser, composer and bandleader. Far more expansive than on his studio dates, his solos are a rare blend of intensity and inventiveness, especially his Herculean unaccompanied reading of "God Bless the Child" and his seven-minute essay on the poignant,

*Continues on page 119*

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FACE THE CHALLENGE IN MUSIC



## McCoy Tyner

### Infinity

IMPULSE! IMPD-171 (72 16)

his is the premier recording of the rejuvenated Impulse! label, home in the '60s to Tyner, John Coltrane, Art Blakey, Quincy Jones, Milt Jackson, Oliver Nelson, Gil Evans, Johnny Hodges, Archie Shepp, Albert Ayler and others of note. Tyner has become a splashier, happier-sounding pianist since those days with the classic Coltrane Quartet. As such, he has to vie with the thunder and serious spirituality of his distinguished past. I find myself looking for the old Tyner, the heavyweight champ, who could send his imitators into oblivion with the thump of a pedal point. This album is not it, although it is a solid, very respectable account of the current Tyner, his well-oiled trio (with bassist Avery Sharpe and drummer Aaron Scott), and supercharged tenor saxophonist Mike Brecker.

Performances such as Tyner's gospelish "Happy Days," infectious "Blues Stride" and romantic, harmonically rich "Where Is Love" show his breadth as a pianist. Thelonious Monk's "I Mean You" turns into a rollicking, slam-hang affair for the leader and Sharpe. The standard, "Good Morning, Heartache," is a rococo piano piano tribute to the late Billie Holiday.

But the *tour de force* of the album is Coltrane's "Impressions," in which Tyner unleashes some of the stabbing lines and chordal intensity of the old days and Brecker blows a furious, Herculean solo from the Coltrane (and his own) hook of saxophone technique. This reminds us that Brecker has done more to bring the Coltrane sound and style into the contemporary vocabulary than any other saxophonist.

— Owen Cordle

## The Tango Kings

### The Tango Kings

BIG WORLD D 2016 (59:56)

he common thread running through these 12 tracks is the sound of Gil Goldstein's accordion. Clearly influenced by the late *bandoneon* master Astor Piazzolla, Goldstein has joined forces with Finnish pianist-composer Iiro Rantala, violinist Mark Feldman, bassist Mike Richmond and four guest guitarists to form this adventurous new group that combines classical, jazz and Argentinean tango into a lilting, satisfying blend. Biréli Lagrène guests on a lovely rendition of Django Reinhardt's "Nuages" and Piazzolla's "Decarisimo." Adam Rogers showcases his nylon string acoustic playing on Egberto Gismonti's "Loro" (also highlighted by some slick whistling by Jodok the parrot) while Toninho Horta is the featured singer and guitarist on a tango-fied rendition of Pat Metheny's "Antonia." Brazilian guitarist Romero Lubambo is also prominently featured throughout.

Rantala's writing is in the rich, passionate tradition of tango revolutionary Piazzolla, a quality that comes across most strongly on "Astorale" and "Tango Mechanique." His arrangements also show a keen ear for dynamics and a tendency toward the dramatic. Between Rantala's writing and the singular ensemble sound, this is easily one of the most unique and uncompromising projects of the year.

— Bill Milkowski



## Randy Johnston

### In A-Chord

MUSE MCD 5512 (49:47)

his is a thoroughly satisfying, swinging, straight-ahead date with

organist Joey DeFrancesco, drummer Mickey Roker, and, on several tracks, young tenor saxophonist Eric Alexander. The leader's fluid guitar work and the down-home feeling of the band harken back to Wes Montgomery. The rhythm trio's version of "Wonder Why" is a perfect example of ageless, good-feeling jazz. You don't have to work at these performances, yet there's plenty of musical thought with the groove, as Johnston's creative extemporizations and DeFrancesco's propulsive footwork, lines and chords show. "Sunday in New York," "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," "One For My Baby" and "Temptation" are among the standards heard here. Recommended without reservation.

—Owen Cordle



## Ray Brown

### Seven Steps to Heaven

TELARC CD-83384 (63/11)

Ray Brown, bassist extraordinaire, is a living legend whose saga continues. As annotator Donald Elfman points out, during the past decade Brown's legacy has taken on an even deeper luster because of the bassist's trio, initially with Gene Harris and Jeff Hamilton, but now with pianist Benny Green and drummer Gregory Hutchinson. For added color, the trio is augmented by the Montgomery-esque stylings of Swedish guitarist Ulf Wakenius. Results are superb. Here, the roars of Brown's young lions are discretely choreographed. In tracks such as the sprightly "My Romance," pre-arranged intros and outros provide engaging hooks and structural finesse. There's also a refreshing sense of spatiality. There's no clutter. Even at brisk tempos, time seems to unfold with an unhurried gait. Ditto for ballads like the luxuriant "In a Sentimen-

tal Mood" or the Caribbean-inflected "Samba de Orfeu." As with Brown's previous trios, jazz becomes thoughtfully inspired conversation. Rather than parading hyper-virtuosic one-liners, there's a genuine give-and-take that builds gradually, and collectively, to make its points. In all, a small masterpiece where bluesy sounds-of-surprise tickle the mind as well as the soul.

—Chuck Berg

## Klaus Doldinger

### Doldinger In New York: Street of Dreams

BLUEMOON 92677 (64/40)

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elicits artful performances from pianist Tommy Flanagan, bassist Charnett Moffett, drummer Victor Lewis, and guests Roy Ayers (vibes) and Don Alias (percussion). In tight settings from duo to sextet, these stalwarts generate skillful solos and fine support in their first-time collaboration with Doldinger.

With equal fervor on tenor and soprano, Doldinger exhibits flowing rich-toned, articulate style. He explores wide-ranging emotions, from bluesy tenorisms of his shuffle opener, "Yellow Cab," to seductive soprano smears on Ellington's "I Got It Bad," to Rollins-like, raspy tenor phrasing (in a splendid duo with Moffett) on Monk's "Well You Needn't."

For the satisfying mainstream mix-

ture of tunes and tempi, varied settings, and all-around, keen musicianship, *Doldinger in New York: Street of Dreams* is a radiant album, an uplifting session that invites repeated listenings.

—Nancy Ann Lee

## Shirley Horn

### The Main Ingredient

VERVE 314 529 555 (53:21)

Jazz diva Shirley Horn casts a haunting spell with her intimate, purring vocals, dramatic use of space and spare piano playing on her last three Verve outings (1992's with strings project, *Here's To Life*, 1993's *Light Out Of Darkness*, and 1994's *I Love You Paris*). That subtle, sensuous quality is indeed part of the appeal of *The Main Ingredient*, particularly on poignant ballads like "Come In From the Rain" and "The Look of Love" and a positively intoxicating version of "You Got to My Head." But this time out the diva also lets her hair down and gets funky on a few tracks like "Blues For

Sarge," a loose jam featuring saxophonist Buck Hill, guitarist Charles Ables and drummer Billy Hart, and a sassy rendition of Dave Frishberg's humorous ditty, "Peel Me A Grape."

Joe Henderson appears alongside Elvin Jones on a powerfully swinging rendition of "All or Nothing at All" and on Horn's brilliant reading of "You Go to My Head." Trumpeter Roy Hargrove guests on a dramatic version of "The Meaning of the Blues," turning in one of his more relaxed and soulful performances on record. Exquisite and engaging, delightful and delicious. —Bill Milkowski

## Greg Abate Quintet

### Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde

CANDID CCD 79715 (76:15)

Rhode Island altoist Abate faces off with his "altered ego," Richie Cole, aka Mr. Alto Madness, in a decent bop date with the very clean pee-bee-dee of Chris Neville, Paul Del Nero and Artie

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Cabral. The ensembles are brisk, the protocols polite, the soloing good, even hearty and honest. But the weird, perhaps wonderful, excesses implied in the title are lacking. The play-safe, if swaying, nature of the date is largely due to the derivative nature of Abate's tunes. I waited for some of the incandescent exchanges that the once madcap Cole had waxed on Muse with the likes of Eric Kloss (1977) or Phil Woods (1980)—and waited. If they'd played a few more bop warhorses like "Tomahawk," where horns and Neville all sparkle, we might have seen some frighteningly wonderful personality changes instead of all deadpanning. Though they did some peppery fours at last on the Ornithological "Parallel," neither dude showed that Mr. Hyde wild streak: they're more like Hekyll and kevll.

This chili-free stir-fry was served up at John Chan's won-ton and fried-rice palace in Woonsocket, RI. Chan, a devout and dedicated jazz fan, has been hosting jazz on weekends since 1979. (One memorable weekend encounter that made it to disc from Chan's ami-

able stage was Rebecca Parris & Phil Wilson). By the way, one of Abate's prettiest tunes is "Chan's House of Jazz." —Fred Bouchard



## Ken Pepowski

*It's A Lonesome Old Town* Ⓢ

CONCORD JAZZ CCD-4673 (58.39%)

We've come to expect a certain fluency and enthusiasm from Peplowski, who has a buoyant approach that lifts your spirits with each performance. This is true with this album "More Than Ever," to borrow the title of the opener (written by guest trumpeter Tom Harrell). On clarinet, Peps exhibits

a lovely liquid tone and a Benny Goodman-like style; on tenor, he suggests the rhapsodies of Coleman Hawkins and (as annotator Dan Morgenstern says), Lucky Thompson. Guitarist Howard Alden is his true soul-mate, as contrapuntal trio performances with guest guitarist Charlie Byrd on "These Foolish Things" and "Supposin'" show. Pianist Marian McPartland also appears. Her Bix Beiderbecke-like harmonies on "It Never Entered My Mind" are a treat. Pianist Allen Farnham, bassist Greg Cohen and drummer Alan Dawson—all sterling musicians—comprise the core group along with Peps and Alden. Harrell (heard on three cuts) sounds surprisingly like Art Farmer.

—Owen Cordle

## Jane Ira Bloom

### The Nearness ④

ARABESQUE JAZZ A10120 (65:27)

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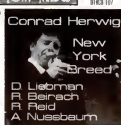
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spatial parameters" of music. Although her techniques are more evident in live performance, where you can almost see the sound waves traveling through the air with the movement of the players, in this new release she, nevertheless, creates a musical sound adventure in each selection.

Besides inventing new pieces ("It's a Corrugated World," "Panasonic") and enhancing old ones ("Midnight Round/'Round Midnight," "Nearly Summertime"), Bloom also displays her considerable talent with her horn, blowing in turn smooth, hot and mellow.

Bloom has assembled a simpatico lineup of fellow travelers who, in their varied combinations, imbue each track with a slightly cosmic yet well-grounded feel. The tunes are layered yet have a sparseness to them, not slight but slightly incandescent. Riding the sound waves are pianist Fred Hersch, drummer Bobby Previte, bassist Rufus Reid, trombonist Julian Priester and trumpeter Kenny Wheeler. Their playing shares Bloom's sensitivity ("Monk's Tale/The Nearness of You") and sense of humor

("The All-Diesel Kitchen of Tomorrow"), and together they take us to some out of the way places yet always remain within reach. —Sunsh Stein

## Lester Young

### The Complete Aladdin Recordings

BLUE NOTE 32787 (60/50/64-05)

even more than its improved sound quality, what is most commendable about this set of long-awaited reissues is the addition of an earlier session never before grouped with the 1945-47 Philo/Aladdins; the inclusion of "One O'Clock Jump," the only track omitted from Blue Note's otherwise complete CD release of a long-forgotten Helen Humes session with Pres. Perhaps the least well-known of Lester's mid-period dates is the one of July 1942 with Nat Cole and Red Callender. Originally issued on two 12" 78s, "Indiana," "I Can't Get Started," "Tea For Two" and "Body and Soul" find the tenorman in a seldom-heard trio

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context and presage by almost four years the classic Clef/Norgran dates with Cole and Buddy Rich.

Following these titles we hear Young in a variety of combo settings that also feature, in order of appearance, hornmen Vic Dickenson, Howard McGhee, Willie Smith and Shorty McConnell, as well as pianists Dodo Marmarosa, Joe Albany, Argonne Thornton and Gene DiNovi. In the area of corrections, note that on all prior long-playing reissues of "No Eyes Blues" and "Sax-O-Be-Bop" the titles of these tunes had been reversed, and that here, for the first time since their original release on 78, this misidentification has been put right. Also note the inclusion of a recently discovered instrumental track from the Helen Humes session, a swinging string-of-solos blues, which producer Michael Cuscuna has dubbed "Riffin' Without Helen." The soloists on the rare Humes recordings are Pres, Willie Smith, tenorman Maxwell Davis, guitarist Dave Barbour and an unidentified McGhee-tinged trumpeter who has been listed elsewhere as Snooky Young.

—Jack Sohmer

## Sonny Rollins

### Saxophone Colossus

DCC JAZZ G25-1082 (40-05)

†he title is not hyperbole. Barring a welcome surprise, this will be remembered as one of Rollins' finest recordings during his period of greatest creativity, the mid-1950s. Important as some of his later work has been, the tenor saxophonist's levels of thematic development, assurance, humor and general creative force in *Saxophone Colossus* remain unequalled. As Martin Williams substantiated in a famous analysis, "Blue 7" is the album's masterpiece, but "St. Thomas," "Strode Rode," "You Don't Know What Love Is" and "Moritat" (Mack The Knife) are contenders in the same league. Tommy Flanagan, Doug Watkins and, particularly, Max Roach are the rhythm section. This session was one of Roach's greatest.

The DCC edition, described as a "24 Karat Gold Compact Disc," sounds fine, but my A/B listening comparisons with the Prestige reissue (OJC-291)

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and the same session in *Sonny Rollins: The Complete Prestige Recordings* disclosed no sonic distinction. The packaging approximates the original Prestige LP-7079. In any form, this is an essential album.

—Doug Ramsey

## Jorge Sylvester

### MusiCollage

POSTCARDS (101 1) 59-16

alto saxophonist Jorge Sylvester makes his U.S. recording debut with *MusiCollage*, a befitting title for his kaleidoscopic, deftly-balanced Latin/world/jazz mixtures.

The Panama-born musician, based in New York City since the early '80s, has selected imaginative players who inflame his original tunes with alluring textures and colors. Sylvester teams and trades with trumpeter Claudio Roditi on the front line, showcases vibraphonist Monte Croft, drummer Gene Jackson and guitarist Marvin Sewell from his regular NYC quintet,

and inspires distinctive rhythms from bassist Santi Debriano and percussionist Bobby Sanabria.

42-year-old Sylvester began his career in Panama, leading a salsa band at age 14. He attended Panama Conservatory of Music, relocated to Madrid when he was 22 and spent a decade touring Europe before coming to New York.

Sylvester shines as composer and player, brandishing broadly lyrical language that allows for his (and his soloists') heterogeneous excursions into modern-edged Latin-jazz fusion, modal hard-bop, luxuriant boleros and ballads. *MusiCollage* is the quintessence of creative teamwork—with a Latin edge.

—Nancy Ann Lee

## Theo Bleckmann & Kirk Nurock

### Looking Glass River

TRAUMTUN 2412 (58-43)

*Smooth it glides upon its travel/Here o wimple, there o gleom...* These title-tune lyrics aptly describe fanciful cre-

ations by singer Theo Bleckmann, accompanied by pianist-composer Kirk Nurock. On their second recording for the German label, Bleckmann blends jazz harmonies with tinges of theater, classical and global styles on 11 selections (eight Nurock originals), some inspired by literature and poetry).

Trained by Sheila Jordan and others, Bleckmann is well-grounded in mainstream jazz ("Side by Side" and "The More I See You"), and cleverly expands, inventing pseudo language on "Kaba Nestra" and simulating bird calls on "It Was The Lark."

With warmth and unconstrained spirit, the twentysomething, German-born New Yorker cleverly stretches within his three-octave range, creating fresh (often, eerie) vocal contrasts against Nurock's comping and, on three tunes, fashionings from bassist Mike Richmond and drummer Jeff Hirschfeld.

*Looking Glass River* flows into vocal wonderland. Bleckmann is an uncommon male singer, a talented navigator who boldly surges against melodic

## HELEN SCHNEIDER "Right as the Rain"

Musical Settings Arranged and Conducted by Bob Brookmeyer

This exceptional album reveals a new level of understanding and appreciation that delves deeper into the subtleties of the American songbook, given voice by the expressive dynamics of Helen Schneider's superb, sophisticated delivery. Bob Brookmeyer's appearance on *Right as the Rain* signals the veteran jazz master's return to vocal arranging as well as performing after an extended leave of absence. Brookmeyer contributes several exquisite and mesmerizing trombone passages to the album, and makes a rare appearance behind the keys of a grand piano for the first time since his duets with the late Bill Evans. The creative and synergistic rapport between Schneider and Brookmeyer flows through the very heart of this extraordinary suite of music.



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currents yet always remains captain of his craft. Nurock builds beautiful vessels for their journeys.

—Nancy Ann Lee

## Tomasz Stanko Quartet

### Matka Joanna From the Angels

ECM 1544 (68:07)

Stanko is a mystery trumpeter on this S nearly as mysterious label: he made one lead date (1973) with only a few sightings since. His broad, fluid lines have more texture than structure; he plays with a raspy edge: a spacey, grizzled Kenny Wheeler. These loosely collective compositions—ostensibly written as reflections on a possibly bizarre, spiritual film involving, perhaps, dove-capped nuns and an ax-murderer in a medieval convent—sometimes bite into tangible, rough, likable melody, as on "Maldoror's War Song," the big-boned "Tales For A Girl, 12" and "Cain's Brand." Going with Stanko's cinematic-

graphic flow are three peers among Europe's better fifty-ish free players: drummer Tony Oxley, pianist Bobo Stenson and bassist Anders Jormin.

ECM, typically, denies its listeners information on what is surely one of its more intriguing projects; this dearth is especially tantalizing in that the booklet contains handsome portraits of the band and riveting black and white stills of the 1961 Jerzy Kawalerowicz film that inspired Stanko's music.

—Fred Bouchard

## Ella Fitzgerald

### Sings the Cole Porter Song Book

DCC JAZZ GZS (2) 1079 (54:37/55:44)

↑ he Porter set was the first in Norman Granz's massive Verve project that brought Ms. Fitzgerald together with works of the major 20th century composers of American popular song. It became a best seller in 1956, made a new generation aware of Porter and resuscitated the singer's career, which

had been flagging at Decca.

Later albums in the song book series were more successful musically, but none sold like the Porter. It touched something in listeners and still does. For the most part, Buddy Bregman's arrangements just missed a nexus that would meld Porter's sophistication with Ms. Fitzgerald's interpretive abilities. She is tentative in crucial areas of the lyrics, usually on verses. Questionable breath placement occasionally interrupts her phrasing. Tension sometimes sends her intonation slightly askew. Still, the collection has first-rate Ella in many numbers, including "Let's Do It," "All of You" and an insinuating "Get Out of Town" with rhythm section only. "It's All Right With Me" and "What Is This Thing Called Love," find Ms. Fitzgerald, Bregman and the orchestra in top form.

The singer and the arranger were to consistently click later in 1956 in their Rodgers and Hart collaboration. Only by comparison with that encounter, her superb work with Paul Weston on the Irving Berlin, Billy May on the

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### JAREK ŚMIETANA FLOWERS IN MIND

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One of the very finest jazz guitarists to emerge in many years from Poland! Jarek Śmietana (pronounced Yah-rek Smee-yet-nah) is a swinging, soulful and intelligent player who is adept at playing bebop, swing and even some of the more adventurous modern styles. His first record for KOCH has him leading a tough and tight trio that includes legendary American drummer Idris Muhammad. The group plays 4 of the guitarist's originals plus tunes by Charlie Parker, Jack DeJohnette, John Scofield and Sam Rivers.

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Harold Arlen and Nelson Riddle on the Gershwin, Kern and Mercer albums does the Porter get less than a rave review. It is merely very good.

As for DCC's repackaging, it approximates the look of the Verve LP set and reproduces the liner notes of the original and reissue versions. The sound of the "24 Karat Gold" CDs is good, but the sound of these recordings was always good. I like DCC's jewel box insert that lifts the disc up for easy removal. —Doug Ramsey

## Eric Alexander Sextet

### Full Range

CRISS CROSS CR 1098 (70-00)

What a workout this young tenor player gives his horn, his band, his listeners! Alexander evinces strong ideas played in a stern, lean, never glib style and shows a sound, unslavish sense of bop tradition chorus after chorus. Not even one tentative or mediocre solo, whether smooth crooning on "Darn

That Dream" or "People Will Say We're In Love." His three solid compositions each show a point of view and a touch of character. While there's no bio for a writer to crib from (hey, are true players known by the company they keep, or press releases and liner notes?), there's neither any let-up over eight handpicked stretchers and Alexander's band is killer. Sharing the front line is trumpeter John Swana, another underexposed young-blood; chordal duties fall to Kenny Barron and Peter Bernstein, never crowding, always enhancing, like tempering elders; the explosive rhythm team are ex-Carter-ites Peter Washington and Carl Allen. This, Alexander's second Criss Cross date, is a totally honest smoker. —Fred Bouchard

## Lonnie Smith Trio

### Purple Haze

MUSICMASTERS 01612-65135-2 (\$6.25)

musically, I came of age in the late '60s and early '70s, and so it was

my fate to discover John Coltrane and Jimi Hendrix at roughly the same time. To me, they carried a similar message of freedom. Still, as great an influence as both men had on jazz today, it's so curious how seldom the guitarist's work has made the transition to instrumental adaptations.

Why? Perhaps, like his spiritual descendant, Robert Johnson, the orchestral dimension of his solo work—the unique balance of lead vocal, chordal accompaniment and counter-melody—is too idiomatic to the performer to translate to big band charts; maybe melodies Hendrix sang don't have the same impact when treated as a pure melody.

Producer Todd Barkin has taken a less ambitious but more satisfying route, pairing the noted Hammond master Lonnie Smith with guitarist John Abercrombie (a veteran of many organ trios) and the young veteran Marvin "Smitty" Smith on drums—which in a sense is a slight return to Hendrix's pre-Experience days on the chitlin' circuit, when the guitarist accompanied countless organists, soul tenors and R&B venues.

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CHUCK REDD has long received praise for his superb drumming and has been a sought-after sideman on Vibes for stars like MEL TORMÉ, but this will be his first outing as a leader.

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"Voodoo Chile" paws at the outline of Hendrix's mysterious blues, treating the melody as a vamp figure for extended blowing; the sonic ambience is right on, and the soloing is strong, but where's Jimi? "Up From the Skies," one of Jimi's jazzier themes, is treated to a greasy biscuit of a shuffle beat by drummer Smith; the organist and guitarist toss the melody back and forth; each man takes a spirited solo, and the organist really works those bass pedals and his Leslie (turn it up). The trio treats the dancing "Gypsy Eyes" as an expressive ballad, as Abercrombie turns in a ruminative solo over his ghostly accompaniment, and the piece builds to an almost African percussive coda. "Purple Haze" begins like an LSD calliope and continues at a spooky 4/4 stroll, which occasionally borders on reggae; again, plenty of Hendrix-ian ambience, but little of his authentic spirit (except for the free form "Star Spangled Banner" coda). Still, all in all, this Hendrix-ian flavor encounter is smoky, sensual good-natured fun—a first-rate modern organ trio.

—Chip Stern

## Steve Slagle

### Our Sound!

DOUBLE TIME DTRCD-107 (62:19)

Saxophonist Steve Slagle, probably best known for his arranging and lead alto work for the Mingus Big Band, is a wonderful soloist whose resonant sound and post-bop trajectories make one sit up and take notice. On Monk's "Little Rootie Tootie," for example, Slagle combines the time-shift plasticity of Ornette Coleman with the bop-ish abandon of Jackie McLean. It's deliciously audacious. Then, when Dave Stryker enters with his chorused-up guitar spinning out bluesy Scofield-isms, you can't help but pay attention.

The altoist's quartet is indeed something to get excited about. Backing Slagle and Stryker are bassist Bill Moring and drummer Tony Reedus who keep rhythmic brews bubbling. Although focusing on alto (which is fine), Slagle proves a riveting soprano player whose serpentine swirls make

Gordon Jenkins' "Crazy She Calls Me" a Trane-ish twister. He's also a capable flutist whose bubbly take on "Beautiful Friendship" sparkles with good cheer. Throughout, Stryker's intimate support and lyrical forays are perfect complements to Slagle's more gregarious flights.

—Chuck Berg

## Iodd Coolman

### Lexicon

DOUBLE TIME DTRCD-104 (66:08)

Iodd Coolman's debut for Jamey Aebersold's Double-Time label soars on the wings of Coolman influences Jimmy Blanton, Oscar Pettiford, Sam Jones and Red Mitchell. While fully capable of virtuosic flights (check out his power stroll on "One for Walton"), the busy New York bassist makes his greatest impression with a solid swinging pulse and rich plummy sound that allow the music to dance and indeed lift the bandstand. Here, Coolman is joined on his adventurous walk-

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Bassist Helias has made his newest record as a leader for enja and it shows just how far the musical thinking of this incredible artist has evolved. The colors and textures are unique and the music is individual and brilliant. Mark Helias is one of the most original players, composers and producers in music today.

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about by the wonderful Renée Rosnes on piano and Lewis Nash on drums.

The date also includes three exuberant turns by tenor titan Joe Henderson. Recorded in 1991, just weeks after Henderson's *Lush Life* session for Verve, the tenorist makes mighty contributions to a pungently refracted blues by Rosnes (the title track, "Lexicon"), a tightly wound "Caravan" featuring Henderson's serpentine thrusts, and Coolman's Flamenco-fired "Cancion Para Cadiz." Among the trio tracks, I'm especially partial to Ellington's lovely "All Too Soon" and Benny Carter's breezy "Summer Serenade," two tunes deserving greater exposure. As with standards such as "You Go To My Head" and "Con Alma," one can't help but be impressed by the trio's tight hand-in-glove interplay. —Chuck Berg

## Ronnie Cuber

### In a New York Minute

STEREOPHILE SCDD-31372 (67/57)

When I heard President Clinton refer **W** to "improved relations with

Cuber," I thought of the present hard-driving baritone saxophonist—twice. I recalling his indefatigable work with the New York bands and traditions of our musically hot island neighbors ("Cuber" and PR), unforgettably represented on a lusty flamenco melody, "Con Pasién," where Ron plays his upper horn as a man possessed, like Gato Barbieri. His resurgence as leader also was unwittingly hinted by our Pres (where's his tenor lately?) and certainly is overdue. With our bari idols mellowing markedly in recent years, it's great to hear a guy kick butt on the big, bad horn in the over-ripe, wailing tradition of Pepper Adams, Hamiet Bluiett and Nick Brignola. Cuber, with minimum bluster and maximum imagination, also plays tough ("Dig" and "Bu's Beat"), tender (title track), authoritative ("Caravan").

The young Drew, whose dad cut so many fine sides on this Danish label, is alert and speedy on "Dig," rolls out fat-back modalities on "12/8 Thang" and is pretty hip everywhere else. The Mingus Big Band was the meeting ground for bassist Andy McKee (nice bowing!) and

drummer Adam Cruz: they cook hard in the Mingus/Richmond vein, and are recorded with palpable bounce.

—Fred Bouchard

## Hendrik Meurkens Sambajazz Quartet

### October Colors

CONCORD PICANTE CCD 4670 (53/34)

## Dino Saluzzi, Anthony Cox & David Friedman

### Rios

INTUITION 2156 2 (48/14)

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PALMETTO PM-2013 (49/34)

One of the world's leading exponents of jazz harmonica, German-born Meurkens is abetted here by the all-Brazilian rhythm section of Hebe Alves, piano, Rogerio Botter Maio, bass and Portinho, drums. The opening numbers, "October Colors," "Who

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Did It?" and "In Motion" are spirited sambas with bop inflections. They feature rapid-fire trading between Meurkens and pianist Alves, with Portinho delivering concise, charged statements of his own, on the close of "Who Did It?" and the intro to "In Motion." Alves is a bold accompanist, bringing brilliance, texture and intensity to this release. Five of the ten compositions are Meurkens originals, including the ballad "Night in the Afternoon," from the motion picture *Dolores Claiborne*. The other numbers include Wayne Shorter's "Footprints," the Jobim-Morais composition "Brigas, Nunca Mais," "High Tide" by Thiago de Mello and Claudio Roditi [Roditi penned the liner notes to "October Colors"] and bassist Maio's "Tranchan," Brazilian slang for "hipness." Although Meurkens plays vibes on four cuts, these are less successful than the harmonica-inspired tunes.

The trio of Saluzzi, Cox and Friedman plays a selection of originals imbued with Argentine, jazz, avant-garde and classical influences. Leader Saluzzi is on bandoneon, Friedman plays marimba

and vibraphones and Cox is on bass. Intermittent background percussion is shared by Saluzzi and Cox. The ten cuts, with "My One and Only Love" the sole standard, are unusual, dramatic, even grave. The bandoneon is the instrument of Argentine folk music, and tango and *milonga* strains drift in and out of these pieces, particularly on "Fulano de Tal," "And He Loved his Brother Til the End" and "Los Them." I'm guessing that "Miniguito" is Saluzzi's tribute to the great bassist, given that Saluzzi's solo here is rife with jazz-like runs. Saluzzi's bandoneon is plaintive on the opener, "Los Them," while the brisk "Jad" provides welcome contrast to the sometimes somber mood of these pieces. Although this music is more studied than swinging, I found "Rios" a compelling listening experience.

Two Tito Puente numbers, a Ruben Blades tune, several jazz standards, "Moose the Mooche," "Soul Eyes," "Maiden Voyage" and "It's You or No One," comprise this outing by the Washington D.C.-based Rumba Club. The octet includes Caribbean and U.S. musicians. Bassist Andy Gonzalez is pro-

ducer and guest artist. "Cual es la Idea" and "Todos Vuelven" are wonderfully infectious, perfect vehicles for Rumba Club's saucy rhythms, brassy eruptions, and cool stylings. —Marcela Breton

## Doc Cheatham & Sammy Price

### Duets and Solos

SACKVILLE SK2CD-5002 (62:12/62:39)

## Shorty Baker & Doc Cheatham

### Shorty and Doc

SWINGVILLE OJCCD-859-2 (43:09)

†he two CDs in the Sackville set contain all the music previously issued on three LPs. A dozen of the performances are typical solos by Sammy Price, and by no means all blues and boogie. The other 20 show him as a sturdy, conscientious accompanist with whom Cheatham appears comfortable. "Memphis Blues," for example, illustrates the experience in their relationship. In the first chorus, the trumpeter

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states the theme with a pretty, muted tone. Following Price's strutting tempo and tremolos appropriate to the old song, Cheatham returns, increasing the intensity and ending climactically on high. It's a simple routine, not at all pretentious and it tells the story effectively.

Producer Esmond Edmonds had a terrific idea in putting Shorty Baker and Doc Cheatham together on Swingville—two of the best first trumpets in the business. They sound marvelous blowing in unison at the beginning of "Chitlins," a

blues credited to Edwards. He made a mistake, however, in choosing Walter Bishop, Jr., as pianist. His dour, spare, unswinging style may have been considered cool or hip in 1961, but it fails to energize or unite the rhythm section that included the excellent Wendell Marshall and J.C. Heard. Bebop had no place here, but the veteran trumpets did their thing regardless. And Baker salutes his old pal, Johnny Hodges, with a happy version of "Good Queen Bess."

—Stanley Dance

## Pepper Adams

### Pepper Adams Live

JAZZ JCD-1004 (50:28)

The artistry of the late Pepper Adams is captured here in full bloom thanks to the Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society—a northern California showcase for musicians of this caliber. The live recording was made at the Douglas Beach House at Half Moon Bay in 1977, and no doubt the view of the ocean from the bandstand proved inspirational not only to Adams, but to quartet members John Marabuto on piano, Bob Maise on bass and drummer Ron Marabuto.

And inspired is not too large a word to describe Adams' baritone here. His six-minute-plus solo on "How Long Has This Been Going On" is emotionally and improvisationally compelling, and pianist Marabuto is also impressive. His evocative soloing on "Body and Soul" is first rate, as is Maise's basswork. Adams' own composition, "Bossa Nouveau" opens with a flourish from drummer Marabuto—a toe-tapping romp that lets Adams take flight—and the entire group has a ball showing off their respective bebop chops on Charlie Parker's "Dewey Square."

Recording quality is fair—some extra mics might have come in handy—but the feeling of this intimate club is preserved.

—David Zych

## The Jazz Networks

### Beauty and the Beast

NOVUS 1241-63185-2 (58:11)

The Jazz Networks are trumpeter Roy Hargrove, saxophonist Antonio Hart, pianist Yutaka Shima, bassist Tomo Shima and drummer Masa Osaka. The music here is not strictly from the movie *Beauty and the Beast* but also from films such as *The Jungle Book*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Lady and the Tramp*, et. al. Including tunes such as the title cut, "Chim Chim Chere-ee" and "When You Wish Upon a Star," one might quite naturally presume that this is a children's album. Not quite. These musicians take the music seriously and definitely move away from the melody

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lines and the usual rhythms and make it jazz. "Someday My Prince Will Come" is hardly the dreamy romantic wanderlust that we all know so well. Hart and Hargrove burn it up—the knight in shining armor must be expected to arrive by rocket ship. This is not an album the average jazz fan might pick up. I mean really, *Beauty and the Beast*? And as unrecognizable as some of the tunes are, it's not exactly what might be considered a primer for young children whose parents want to expose them to jazz—though, I suppose, it could be. It is an album that shows the musical possibilities which exist when talented players take to unlikely material. These songs have rarely sounded so good.

—Geraldine Wyckoff

## Dave Bargeron

### Barge Burns...Slide Flies

MAPLESHADE 02832 (58-01)

**T**rombonist Bargeron and pianist Larry Willis, members of the jazz-rock group Blood, Sweat & Tears in the '70s, reunite on this album. With bassist Steve Novosel and drummer Kenwood Dennard, they create a daring, high-spirited, sometimes irreverent set that owes little if any to BS&T's recordings. This is certainly okay, because stronger jazz auras prevail: Thelonious Monk, Roswell Rudd, Ray Anderson, Phil Wilson and Wynton Kelly.

Bargeron, who also played tuba with BS&T, is a virtuoso. The opener, his "Gussie Blues," illustrates much of his arsenal: broad melodies, squealing climaxes and splashy landings, machine-gunning articulation, and an extroverted sense of humor. Next, his "Holly's Song" tones down the raucous energy as the trombonist plays soft low notes and executes a long fall-off reminiscent of Wilson. "B.R.A.V.O." introduces the Bargeron Rapid Articulating Valve Option, a mouthpiece valve that improves the player's speed of articulation.

Willis has a bouncy, boppish approach—light and swinging. On the final tune, his "Blue Autumn," he and Bargeron turn as lovely and placid as a melody by Debussy. These cats cover the waterfront; and if you haven't heard Bargeron lately, you've been

missing someone who deserves far greater recognition among the trombonists of today.

—Owen Cordle

## Johnny Varro

### Swing 7

ARBORS JAZZ ARCD 19138 (66-02)

One of the reasons that veteran jazz pianist Johnny Varro formed his *Swing 7* was to revive the ensemble sound of the John Kirby Sextet, one of

the most influential combos of the Swing Era. But rather than limit himself to the three-horn format of trumpet, clarinet and alto, as originally played by Charlie Shavers, Buster Bailey and Russell Procope, he extended the voicing possibilities by adding trombone and tenor. This, his present front line as heard on this debut recording, consists of trumpeter Randy Sandke, trombonist Dan Barrett, clarinetist and altman Phil Bodner and tenorman Harry Allen, while the orderly but swinging time is

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laid down by bassist Frank Tate and drummer Joe Ascione.

The texture and phrasing of the Kirby group is preserved on "Maxine," "Coquette" and "Then I'll Be Happy," original charts artfully enhanced by Varro's re-scoring and a round of stylistically appropriate solos. Other facets of Varro's wide embrace and his sidemen's versatility are revealed on Ellington's "Black and Tan Fantasy" and "What Am I Here For?," tracks notable for the Nanton and Webster nuances in the solos of Barrett and Allen; "Beale Street

Blues," with Bodner's fluent clarinet adding to the ensemble's sunny, Condon-like ambience; Al Cohn's "High On You," which again features the multi-talented young tenorman, this time in a Pres mode; and Mel Powell's sparkling paean to one of his own masters, "The Earl," a piano showcase that Varro chews up in regal style. The other numbers on this equally balanced program are "Disc Jockey Jump," "If Dreams Come True," "One Morning in May," "Shiny Stockings," "Foolin' Around" and "Just Friends."

—Jack Schmeier

## Red Norvo

### *The Red Norvo Trio with Tal Farlow & Charles Mingus*

SAVOY SV-0267 (63:35)

In between the works of the original Benny Goodman Trio and Quartet and the George Shearing Quintet on one hand, and the Modern Jazz Quartet on the other, the 1950-'51 recordings chronicled on *The Red Norvo Trio with Tal Farlow and Charles Mingus* are among the most innovative examples of what has come to be known as chamber jazz. From the relentless popish drive of "Move" to the classical grandeur of "I'll Remember April" and "Mood Indigo," the wit and technical range of this trio is phenomenal.

Vibraphonist Red Norvo was also one of a handful of swing era luminaries to navigate the harmonic and rhythmic challenges of bebop (he recorded with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie in 1945). When economic conditions made touring with a sextet impossible, Norvo decided to dispense with a rhythm section, and in Farlow and Mingus he found players who had an innate rhythmic drive all their own and shared his fascination with sophisticated harmonies.

Norvo's steely rhythmic articulation reflects his earliest experiences as an acoustic mallet player. Mingus' perfect intonation and percussive drive gave the trio a powerful rhythmic thrust at equestrian tempos ("Zing! Went the Strings of My Heart"), while Farlow's rich chording, fleet phrasing and colorful range of percussive effects allowed him to complement Norvo's jaunty lines, while suggesting horns, keyboards... even hand-drums ("Night and Day").

Thanks to their contrapuntal intuition and elaborately crafted arrangements, the Red Norvo Trio was able to achieve an orchestral level of color and dynamic expression. Listen to the canny dissonances, rhythmic stutters and joyous harmonic abandon with which they attack "Check to Check," or how they explode the good-natured Latin clichés of "Time and Tide" (where Mingus' flamboyant bowing and plucked cross-rhythms make it sound as if the entire band is playing

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with a rose between their teeth). On "Prelude to a Kiss" they deploy an elaborate series of collective thematic variations, creating palpable harmonic tension with a series of fanciful motifs behind each other's solos, while "Godchild" is representative of the trio at their least complicated and most swinging.

—Chip Stern

## Avery Sharpe

### Extended Family II Thoughts of my Ancestors

JRNM A589892 (54:25)

Avery Sharpe translates his African and Native American heritage into a musical odyssey on this new release, where each piece tells its own tale, yet helps create an integrated whole. Longtime bassist for McCoy Tyner, Sharpe excels on his instrument and shows creative composing and arranging skills as well. All the pieces are his design, except the traditional "Wade in the Water."

Besides paying tribute to his ancestors, Sharpe honors bass forefathers, singing like Slam Stewart and Major Holley on one tune and slapping like Milt Hinton in a piece dedicated to him, "Judge Not Yet Ye Be Da Judge." The music on "Who Have I Offended," "Summon The Elders" and the title cut clearly conveys the image their titles evoke.

The players, several of whom are related to Sharpe, are too numerous to mention. However, guitarist Kevin Eubanks has some notable moments, as does the Extended Family Choir.

—Sunsh Stein

## Charles Mingus

### Mingus, Mingus, Mingus, Mingus, Mingus

IMPULSE! IMPD-170 (45:49)

Mingus told Nat Hentoff that he conceived the 11-piece ensemble of these 1963 recordings as a small unit. In "Hora Decubitus," he achieved, with a vengeance, his goal of matching the swing of Harlem jump bands like the Savoy Sultans. Nonetheless, as in the case of Mingus' "Wingdings" companion album, *The Black Saint and the Sinner Lady*, the fullness and power of

his writing often make the group sound like a full-fledged big band. Ellingtonian undercurrents in the voicings add to the impression. Some of the music was new, including the intriguing "Celia" and "I X Love." "Theme for Lester Young" (aka "Goodbye, Porkpie Hat") and "Better Get Hit in Yo' Soul" are remakes of classic Mingus Columbia recordings, the latter at a velocity that would have deflated musicians with less virtuosity. The previously unreleased "Freedom" is more effective in its original form on Mingus' live Town Hall recording of

1962. Among the soloists in this basic repertoire item are saxophonists Charlie Mariano, Booker Ervin and Eric Dolphy, all inspired by Mingus' intensity and drive.

—Doug Ramsey

## Illinois Jacquet

### Illinois Jacquet

LEGACY EPC EK 64614 (60:42)

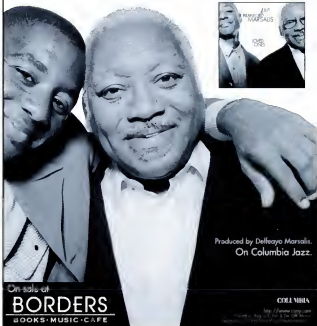
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The well-chosen personnels include Roy Eldridge, Sir Charles Thompson, Kenny Burrell, George Duvivier, Jo Jones, Jimmy Crawford and—on his final record session—Leo Parker.

Jaquet plays alto on a very fast "Indiana" and the Debussy-derived "Reverie." His rugged tenor, here somewhat somber on ballads, is exciting as always on swinging vehicles like "Frantic Fanny," "Banned in Boston," "Y-deen-O" and "Pucker Up." Sir Charles Thompson gives a Basie touch to several performances, especially to the originals by Jimmy Mundy (writing here under the *nom de plume* of "G. Bruce"). His single-note lines sing and impart rhythmic assurance in a largely personal fashion.

Producer John Hammond was presumably responsible for the fact that there are no guitar solos, indicating perhaps a continuing allegiance to Freddie Green's conception of the instrument's role. Roy Eldridge, needless to say, is responsible for several stinging hipshots.

—Stanley Dance

## Jack Pezanelli

### Pleased Hands

BROWNSTONE BRCD 955 (39:21)

Straightahead to be sure, Pezanelli's fluent, solid, clear-toned guitar style bristles with undeniable enthusiasm. Ringed by pianist John Arcaro, drummer Jimmy Madison and bassist Michael Moore, he laces Jim Hall's "Simple Samba" with swift, elegant, long single-note lines, and ventures into blues territory on "Fee-fi-fo-fum" and "Born To Be Blue." His solo treatment of "In A Sentimental Mood" profits from tightly voiced chords, crystalline open strings and judicious overall reharmonization. "Second Look," a double-tracked duet, finds him supplying his own backup, while he swings his way through one well-phrased chorus after another. Throughout, the supporting cast plays skillfully, anchored by Moore's masterful work in F-clef. The only disappointment is length of the set, which falls short by about 20 minutes.

—Jim Ferguson

## The Don Bennett Trio

### Solar

CANJO CCD79723 (64:43)

There's a lot of blues goin' on in Don Bennett's great big piano. He lets you know that from the start with one of two originals, "Blues for Nikki" and a trill-filled version of "Since I Fell for You." Bennett's got a soulful sound, solid on the bass notes and with rippling right hand as heard on the title cut, Miles' "Solar." He goes after another Miles tune, the familiar "Tune Up," which skips along with the help of bassist James Long and drummer Douglas Sides. At the piano alone for the intro of "Blue Moon," Bennett disassembles the classic tune only to put it together again when his rhythm section returns, then dissects it once more with the addition of his well-placed flourishes. Bennett and his long-time associates bring a lot of feeling to

*Continues on page 106*

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CDs, *continued from page 90*

the session, resulting in a satisfying performance. —Geraldine Wyckoff

### **Andy Laster's Hydra**

#### *Polyogue*

SONGLINES SGL 1507-2 (66/59)

It's tempting to compare saxophonist Andy Laster to Tim Berne. Both play a hard-edged alto and baritone. Their compositions often bundle vivid thematic materials in episodic structures. They have many of the same collaborators, including trumpeter Herb Robertson, cellist Hank Roberts and bassist Ed Schuller. Yet, Laster's a rugged individual with his own voice. Unfortunately, his strong, almost decade-long string of dates have yet to yield Laster the shots at the majors Berne's early efforts afforded him. In addition to its substantial musical merits, *Polyogue* puts Laster a step closer, market-wise, to wider recognition. Issued by Vancouver's flinty Songlines label, it will undoubtedly be in more Stateside bins, and at a more affordable price, than Laster's previous European CDs. The buzz of discovery awaits the adventurous consumer, as *Polyogue* is brimming with vigorously swinging blowing vehicles, extended pieces built on high-contrast materials and pungent pastiches. Laster not only confirms he is an engaging soloist, regardless of axe or setting, but a leader with a knack of matching materials with musicians, as attested by the work of cohorts Robertson, bassist Drew Gress, drummer Tom Rainey and guitarist Brad Schoepbach.

—Bill Shoemaker

### **Frank Kimbrough**

#### *Lonely Woman*

MAPLESHADE 56282 (61/00)

**B**illed as a protege of Shirley Horn, Kimbrough is becoming widely known among the younger generation of pianists, and here he

shares the podium with bassist Ben Wolfe and drummer Jeff Williams.

This session was recorded on the Maryland-based Mapleshade label a few years back and features the lyricism and interplay of the up-and-coming youngsters.

The album captures their mellow and evocative sensitivity on a variety of impressionistic originals, while Kimbrough gets inside the ballads (Jimmy Rowles' "The Peacocks" and Ornette's "Lonely Woman"). Kimbrough is perhaps most effective in his rendition of Herbie Nichols' "House Party Starting," achieving a true swinging sensibility; this may be his more natural affinity, as he impressed recently on an NEA fellowship of a Nichols project.

—Sid Gribetz

### **Steve Hobbs**

#### *On the Lower East Side*

CANDID CCD 79704 (65/27)

**V**ibraphonist Steve Hobbs makes a solid debut on Candid in an intimate date featuring pianist Kenny Barron, bassist Peter Washington and drummer Victor Lewis, a Rolls Royce of a rhythm section whose quiet intensity and nuanced support help keep the spotlight on Hobbs' shimmering vibes. A mainstream modernist, Hobbs' unfussy and straightforward approach bears comparison to role models Bobby Hutcherson, Mike Mainieri and Milt Jackson.

In an effective program, Hobbs includes a medium-tempo, 4/4 version of "Amazing Grace," a romping roundelay in 3/4 called "Around and Around" and a moving ballad treatment of Gus Arnheim's "Sweet and Lovely." He switches to the more percussive marimba for a breakneck run-down of Jerome Kern's "The Song Is You." Though Hobbs' stumbles a bit in negotiating the flying chordal marks, he recovers quickly. The medium-paced "Pedra Bonita" with its bossa beat is a clear winner, as is Hobbs' moody, modal "Thinking of Chet," a tribute to the late Chet Baker.

—Chuck Berg

gentle and fresh—when placed in a thudding mid-tempo percussion program ("Phat") it dissolves completely, while in bright synth-based ensembles ("Anima") it becomes the instrumental equivalent of a Christopher Cross vocal. Don't give up too soon, though—a pair of hyper classic trio covers ("Footprints" and "Impressions") create a live, vital sound which proves a perfect fit, with Howard's guitar as the eye of the storm amidst brisk rhythmic bass and drums. Howard's best original, "Thank(s) Pam," echoes this trimmer style with a tight quartet playing funky blues. This streamlined tune provides the most texture of all, illustrating the adage that sometimes less is more.

Acoustic guitar enthusiasts have another reason to celebrate this month as **Doug Smith** brings his strong-picked technique to a range of styles on *Deep Heart* (Honest Entertainment HON CD 1011; 43:37). Utilizing sparse arrangements highlighting percussion, Smith plays with strong dynamics on originals like the tapping folk-inspired "Two Handed Paradox" and "The Rose and the Pearl," a resonant piece of musical storytelling which for all its exploration keeps a main anchoring hook throughout. Smith's best work digs deeply into tradi-

tional forms—the Irish flavor of "The Jig is Up" moves forward with a dark undertone, showing an impressive range of feeling, for example. "Mystic Morning" swatches a heavy, almost tribal drumbeat in hard-played folk chords for a majestic cadence. Smith proves adept at song intervention as well, as his intricate picked background envelops the haunting melody "I Only Have Eyes for You."

Fascinating jazz history lessons can be found on the loopy and brilliant reissue package *Mike Mainieri & Friends: White Elephant* (1969-72) (NYC NYCP 4011-4). Among the two dozen or so "friends" featured on this series of experimental large-group jams are Michael and Randy Brecker, Tony Levin, Steve Gadd and Jon Faddis. Together they have a heck of a good time wandering through improvisations which typify the styles of the time while foretelling experiments yet to come. The percussion and big brass energy of "Battle Royal" will bring War and Three Dog Night spinning back to mind, in contrast to the evolving fat blues walk of "The Jones" (which springs out of some strange places, as well). The centerpiece of this oddball collection is its 12-minute title track—a dreamy, continually developing showcase of give and take leads and groove builds that offers glimmers of insight into many twisted young musical minds. ■

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time, I didn't know it was her signature song, so I got to start fresh.

All artists strive for our own voice but I think we start out emulating, in imitation and singing what we've heard other people do. Like singing over lines and repeating what other people did, that becomes your foundation to work from. Eventually, we all strive to work off of that foundation.

Women like Billie were around for a long time carrying the torch and

they left a hell of a legacy for us, some big shoes for young singers to follow, to walk in...

Some of those tunes, they never did anything for me 10 years ago when I first started, like "Easy Living." But now, I'm starting to really do something with the songs and I believe that a lot of that has to do with maturity. Sometimes lyrics don't connect with you because you haven't lived enough life to be able to know what the song is talking about, or do it with some conviction. You don't have enough experience to bring to the

lyrics to give it shape and form. It comes so much more natural when you've actually lived these experiences.

## WALTER BISHOP, JR.

When I was playing with Charlie Parker and we were doing the Bird and Strings thing, we had a gig in Pittsburgh. I came in from New York myself to make the gig and when I got there and saw Bird, the first thing he said to me was, "I know you brought some stuff with you." We were both addicts at the time. I said to Bird, "I thought you had some stuff." Anyway, neither of us had any stuff, which spells big trouble when you're on the road in a strange town.

We read in the paper where Billie Holiday was also appearing in town. Bird saw that and he said, "oh, Lady's got some shit, let's go over there." We found out where she was staying. So we went over to the Fort Pitt Hotel and I stood back and watched these two giant behemoths embrace, there was such love between them. In fact, I was awed seeing Billie Holiday and Bird embrace like that. We made some small talk and then Billie said, "Bird, you got some stuff, right?" Bird said, "No, we came over here because we thought you had some stuff." So when the deal went down and neither party had any dope, the silence was deafening. I said to myself, where is the love?

But Billie was more than a singer, she was a musician using her voice as an instrument and so her peers, other musicians, loved her. She got some of her phrasing from Louis Armstrong and gave it her unique vocal touch. And the way she shurred things like Pres, it was just great. That was a classic combination, her and Pres. And of course musicians loved to play with her because it was like playing with another musician as opposed to a musician playing with a singer. Now in the black community, she was accorded the love and respect she deserved, during her lifetime.

## JIMMY ROWLES

It was extremely enjoyable to work as her accompanist because of the way she phrased everything. She really told a story. She didn't like a whole stream of notes behind her. If a guy was a real busy piano player, she

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**ARI BROWN**  
*Ultimate Frontier (446)*

Ari Brown's recent activity is dizzying. He is currently in Elvin Jones' group. Kahil El'Zabar's Ritual Trio, and has recorded with Lester Bowie, Malachi Thompson and others. *Ultimate Frontier* is the debut album from a Chicago tenor sax legend.



**ZANE MASSEY**  
*Safe To Imagine (447)*

Bob Blumenthal's review of Zane Massey (Massey's first Delmark album) said, "He has developed a big, groovy tenor sax sound and a concept of great continuity and rhythmic momentum." *Safe To Imagine* is another stirring, emotional offering from an important voice of '90s jazz.



**NRG ENSEMBLE**  
*This Is My House (445)*

NRG's debt to its founder Hal Russell, who passed away in '92, is as apparent as the group's continuing evolution, most notably in their focus on the frenzied extreme of the sonic spectrum. With Mars Williams, Ken Vandermark, Kent Kessler, Brian Sandstrom and Steve Hunt.

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didn't like that. She just wanted you to comp, that's all. She was the one they were listening to, it's not a piano solo. So many people who back a singer do that, they overdo it.

She taught me a lot about phrasing. I learned a lot from her. She'd tear your heart out. So many musicians play songs their entire lives and haven't the slightest idea what the lyrics mean. That marriage of the lyric and the song, if the lyric is good, the marriage is a good marriage and you've really got something. It inspires you to play, especially if you got someone who knows how to interpret that song like no one else. There wasn't anybody in her day who could touch her. And they got all these singers around today, there isn't a one of them who can compare to Lady Day and you know it. And there isn't anybody who can touch Sarah Vaughan either.

And on top of everything else, Lady Day, until she became so undernourished, anemic and everything, she was a beautiful girl. When I first met her in the '40s, she was very, very beautiful. But she was a tough cookie too.

#### SANDRA REAVES

Let me tell you something else, I've performed all over the world and with all the things that she suffered, The Lady was able to sing the song in such a way that people still scream out when you hit a Billie Holiday tune, even in your worst voice. If you sing something of Billie Holiday, every country that I've been in, something of The Lady, people of every age, every type of person, they respond. Even kids, they don't relate to the original Billie but they certainly remember the Lady Day that Diana Ross portrayed. In fact, a lot of young kids today think that movie was the Lady Day and I have to say, "baby, you really need to go and listen to the original. You think you've seen or heard something, you really need to go find Billie Holiday and listen to that sinewy voice, the whine of a violin, the sorrowfulness of her." It seems like you can feel a weeping willow tree in her stature, the way she hung her head as she sung a song, the way her eyes rolled up and around as she reached for that emotion, that little slanted smile she had when her musicians were playing the right music for

her. Those are the things I see and I feel when I think of Billie Holiday.

#### WALTER BISHOP, JR.

I have mixed emotions about the movie they did, *Lady Sings the Blues*. I know it was mostly fabrication but I loved seeing her depicted on the big screen, documented, and I think Diana Ross did a hell of a job because as the picture wore on, she sounded more and more like Billie, even though it was out of her genre. Diana Ross is certainly not a jazz singer.

So I dug the film even though a lot of people panned it, because I think they certainly did a much better job depicting Billie than they did with Bird. You have to look at the broader spectrum it put her in, because when she hit the big screen, a lot more people started checking her out and going and buying her records, that was the big thing for the movie. I don't think it worked out that way for Bird. His movie was such a negative portrayal that aside from other musicians, I don't think people went out and bought his records.

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# JACKIE CAIN

Roy and I eventually settled in Vegas for six years, back in the '50s, working Vegas, Reno and Tahoe, the gambling circuit. Well, at this particular time, we had been out of town and when we got back to Vegas, Billie was appearing at the Sahara Hotel. I looked in the paper and realized it was her last night at the Sahara. We were exhausted because we had just driven in from somewhere, a long trip and everything but I said to Roy, "I would really like to go and see

Billie because she's closing tonight and if we don't go tonight, we won't get to see her." I hadn't seen her in five or six years. He had just driven the whole trip and he was too tired but I got in the car and went over there.

I remember the sad feeling I had looking at her because she was in this lounge in the Sahara and all the slot machines and everything are in the room in the back but there's really no partition. While you're listening to the music or performing, you can just hear the slot machines going and the crap dealers and

people yelling and talking loud.

Billie was up on the stage when I walked in. She didn't look very well. I didn't realize it until later but this was a period when she was quite ill. In fact she died a couple of months later. I looked at her and she had on this beautiful chiffon dress, she looked like a Southern belle, totally out of place. She looked so very fragile and her voice was kind of weak. Of course they always keep the sound down in a place like that because they don't want to disturb the gamblers. It was so pathetic, I felt so badly for her.

But she was up there doing her thing. She didn't have much strength, it wasn't her best singing, but it was her, and I was real thrilled that I got to see her. After the end of the set she was getting off the stage and I went over to her, and I was wondering if she'd remember me because I hadn't seen her in so long. I probably looked different, I thought she probably wouldn't even remember me anymore. So she came out from under the bar and I was standing there and I walked up to her and said "Billie, do you remember me?" She looked at me and said, "oh Jackie," she remembered me real well and put her arms around me and while she was hugging me, she whispered in my ear, "you're the first human being I've seen since I've been here." That was like a knife in the heart, I felt so bad for her...

Billie had her heyday. She did a lot of great things, but she didn't have a very happy life because she was always with the wrong man. A lot of her men abused her and stole from her and took from her. It was just so sad that she was in that situation.

# IRA GITLER

She was a demi-goddess to us. I haven't heard anyone to equal her singular personality and approach to a song. I love Sarah Vaughan equally but Billie Holiday is in a separate niche.

RECOMMENDED VIEWING: *Lady Day, The Many Faces of Billie Holiday*, distributed by Kultur Video (908) 229-2343.

RECOMMENDED READING: *Billie Holiday* by Stewart Nicholson, published by Northeastern University Press. 



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## Harry Skoler

Conversations  
in the Language of Jazz

BROWNSTONE BRCD 952 (71:30)

Skoler is a clarinetist, Berklee and S New England Conservatory trained, who displays a mastery of his instrument and a sweet, laid back attack. He's a student of Jimmy Guiffre, and it shows, while there's no direct link or derivative playing.

The disc includes many standards and some Benny Goodman numbers, all played in the same assured manner, but without much swing or bite.

Contributing to this refined atmosphere is vibist Ed Saindon, who complements Skoler beautifully, most notably in the interplay on the extended title track original. If you enjoy delicate and sweet music, this disk should rate high.

—Sid Gribetz

## Iain Ballamy

## All Men Amen

BIRW MUSIC BW065 (45:15)

His British issue features multi-saxophonist Iain Ballamy in a quartet setting that displays his composing and playing abilities. Eight original songs range from the serene title track to the ghostly sway of "Haunted Swing" and a visit to the mystical "Meadow." A pleasant listen, mostly angular and airy, his alto communicating "Serendipity," exuding Latin warmth on "Oaxaca" and enhancing his tenor with tape-looping on "Further Away."

—Patricia Myers

## The Little Big Band

## Truth and Consequences

JIGMO IG 49502 (65:37)

His debut entry by altman Doug Little and pianist Nate Shaw's Twin Cities-based sextet is an ideal reflection of the talents emerging from locales other than New York. With ages raging from 20 to 25, the group is unusual in that most of the members are not only promising soloists, but also composers of striking merit. Represented here by

two challenging charts each, the co-leaders, along with trumpeter Mark Sutton, trombonist Mark Miller and bassist Chris Bates, cover bop, blues, Latino and outside, while drummer J.T. Bates keeps the pot simmering.

—Jack Sohmer

## Mal Waldron Trio

## Black Glory

ENJA CD2004-2 (41:13)

He ever-reticent Mal leaves the opening announcements up to his bass player. He opens with the edgy "Siege Haile," an ode to Emperor Selassie. The piece builds riff by riff then, as if unsatisfied with the construct, Waldron de-constructs riff by riff. There is a certain freedom expressed in the piece, as in Woodie's implied time bass figures. Gratuitous ego exhibits have never been the forte of this most introverted of pianists.

Drummer Pierre Favre has a very wide, airy drum technique that finds him ranging freely yet with sensitivity and logic. There's a certain static maintained throughout this date and Waldron's rather enigmatic persona being what it is, it's rather apropos that the disc fades off into the sunset without so much as an end game signal.

—Willard Jenkins

## Pete Fountain

## A Touch of Class

RANWOOD MCA MSD 35808 (57:03)

He king of Dixieland clarinet fits into a tony orchestral setting for 13 songs often identified with the French. Pete Fountain delivers "La Vie En Rose," "Autumn Leaves" and "April in Paris" with the clean tone and crisp timbre that are his trademarks, and thrill the Lawrence Welk generation. Toward the end of this 18-track album, he inexplicably tosses in a couple of cornballs. So skip "Your Cheatin' Heart" and "You're Nobody 'Til Some-

body Loves You" to get back to France for the final track, a terrific reading of "Rhapsody in Blue."

—Patricia Myers

## Marian McPartland

## Piano Jazz

with guest Dave McKenna

THE JAZZ ALLIANCE TJA-12023 (52:43)

amidst the cozy chit-chat that Marian customarily uses to welcome her guests and put them at their ease, every now and then she elicits insightful comments from them that might not come across in print interviews. That, however, is not the case with the one-on-one spot she shared with McKenna, where the palpable tension is relieved only by the music. Dave solos on two originals, "Cat's Cradle" and "Theodore the Thumper" and explains the meaning of the titles. He also solos on "My Cherie Amour" from a Stevie Wonder medley that also includes a duet treatment of "Isn't She Lovely?" Other duets are on Billy Joel's "Just the Way You Are," "Let's Get Away From It All" and a rather perfunctory, ill-chosen "Struttin' With Some Barbeque."

—Jack Sohmer

## Susanna Lindeborg

## The New Scene

LJ UJCD 59-42)

What a sneaky bunch of musicians we have in Susanna Lindeborg (keyboards), Ove Johansson (tenor sax), Sergei Muchin (bass) and David Sundby (drums); they intertwine challenging harmonics and intriguing melodies to spin out something that's unusual yet easy on the ears. These musicians sound like they've boned up on their Weather Report. Especially Lindeborg, her eclectic and articulate work on acoustic and electric keyboards invokes Joe Zawinul, and Johansson, his sensitivity and tone recall Wayne Shorter. They're not clones, however; this frequently exotic dream-

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scape-ish project stands on its own  
legs.

—Deni Kasel

## The Houdinis

### *The Houdinis Play the Big Five*

CHALLENGE CHR 70027 (59/51)

† he high-spirited Houdinis depart  
from previous all-originals albums  
to tackle the hits of five legendary  
composers. Although the works of  
Gershwin, Kern, Porter, Berlin and  
Rodgers date back to the '30s and  
'40s, the Dutch sextet keeps them  
evergreen.

"Begin the Beguine" is updated by  
minor horn riffs against staccato syn-  
copation, "Dearly Beloved" flies  
funkily, "My Romance" goes gospel  
and "How Deep Is the Ocean?" takes  
to a torrid tenor treatment. Inventive  
arrangements that burst with dynam-  
ics are sparked by strong solos and  
tight section work. —Patricia Myers

## Glenn Horiuchi

### *Kenzo's Vision*

ASIAN IMPROV AIR 0022 (53/57)

† he title track, named for Horiuchi's  
son, contains 14 minutes of thrash-  
ing and clanging and surrealism in an  
Archie Shepp-meets-Cecil Taylor-  
meets-a Japanese hoedown sort of way.  
The march-like "2nd Street Strut," the  
shortest cut (1:27), is the jazziest. The  
music sometimes moves at a frustrat-  
ingly slow pace, accompanied by vast  
vocal groans and low tuba notes. The  
musicians include the leader (heard  
primarily on piano and *shamisen*, a  
Japanese banjo), Francis Wong on  
tenor saxophone, violin and ethnic  
Japanese instruments, William Roper  
on tuba and percussion and Jeanette  
Wrate, voice and percussion. (The  
others contribute vocals, too.) This  
is music for hardy souls with a lot of  
sonic tolerance, non-swinging expecta-  
tions and patience. —Owen Cordle

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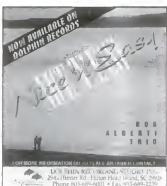
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bottom to the record.

**GR** Were you part of the bass choir that he led in the '70s?

**RC** Yeah. There were seven or eight players. Drums sometimes, sometimes piano. I remember George Coleman made a couple of gigs. We rehearsed in Richard Davis' basement on 87th Street, I think it was. Bill wrote some great music for it. Lisle Atkinson, Michael Fleming, Sam Jones, Milt Hinton, myself, Richard Davis. Sometimes Bill would play. It was a chance not just to play some good music, but to play in a section with bass players. Jazz players almost never get a chance to do that, unless it's on a commercial date that has an orchestra. A wonderful writer, Bill Lee, and a wonderful player, too.

## 6. GEORGE DUVIVIER.

"Over The Rainbow" (from *Strictly Powell*, RCA). Harold Arlen, composer. Bud Powell, leader, piano; Duvivier, bass; Art Taylor, drums. Recorded 1956.

**BEFORE** This is a hard kind of group to play with. The piano player's got these lines all worked out, and the bass player is clearly not aware of what they're going to be. So you have this clash between the piano player's left hand and the bass player's notes—when you can hear them, because it's

not a very good mix job. There's not any presence in the bass part, and the piano player is playing so forcefully—I guess that's a good word for it—that it doesn't give the sound of the bass a chance to develop with each note. It just gets covered by the general piano sound. If you listen to records with the same settings, you can hear how differently they're mixed. I guess that's the reason they have treble and bass on your system at home, so you can make them as even as your individual taste may mandate. But this bass player doesn't have a chance.

**AFTER** Bud just covers him. George would have gone home thinking, "What's a better way to play this tune?" George is just there. Bud doesn't allow George to contribute. They made a record called *Glass Enclosure*, and they were really on the same direction. But on this one, Bud's going to play his way, and he doesn't allow George a chance to affect his thought process.

## 7. WILLIAM PARKER.

"Testimony of No Future" (from *In Order to Survive*, Soul Note). Parker, composer, leader, bass; Cooper-Moore, piano; Dennis Charles, drums. Recorded 1993.

**BEFORE** It's interesting to listen to music that doesn't have swing as its most important component. Clearly,

in this music, swing is not their focal point. It's kind of like aleatory group interplay, only I can't hear the interplay. I hear three people playing, but I don't hear them affecting each other's thought process. When it falls into place, it's an accident. But they're determined not to develop the accident into another kind of music, so they put the accident aside, and you have train wrecks. There was some great music of this style in the late '60s: the Ayler Brothers, Sunny Murray, J.C. Moses, Beaver Harris. They were guys who really played this stuff. They played with more of a group focus, and they didn't seem to be afraid if things fell into place. That was okay, too, and they would develop the place. This music seems bent on, "if we find the place, it must be wrong. Let's try some more random playing and see what happens." It's hard to listen to, because I don't really hear any development of group sense. There are other things to do together besides all playing loud and all playing soft.

**AFTER** I listen to him on WBAI sometimes. On some records he sounds really focused and he's got a nice recorded sound. Other records just sound uncomfortably fragmented. Sometimes he just doesn't develop an idea. He starts to, and then he loses the idea to the sense of being different. That's the problem that most jazz players have. When you come up, you learn that every chord has to be different, that if you're playing jazz there shouldn't be any repeated notes or repeated phrases. But music develops by developing phrases; by developing ideas; by developing of order, a sense of form. This music seems bent on ignoring that possibility to the extent of ignoring each other.

## 8. HENRY GRIMES.

"You Are My Lucky Star" (from *On the Outside* RCA/Bluebird). Sonny Rollins, leader, tenor saxophone; Don Cherry, trumpet; Grimes, bass; Billy Higgins, drums. Recorded 1963.

**BEFORE** Sonny Rollins and Don Cherry. To compare this to the last record, Sonny almost knows too much music to really be good at this style. He leans toward parts of songs, key centers, changes. He leans toward real

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dirge-like "The Prophet." The latter is a pivotal composition in Dolphy's canon, as it subordinates structural considerations to palpable emotional projection. Thanks to annotator Bill Kirchner's research, any question that this great quintet was Dolphy's has been put to rest. No previous or subsequent Dolphy unit so cogently shifted from the astute chamber jazz of the trumpet, flute, and arco bass intro to "Like Someone in Love" to the fervor of Little's aptly named "Aggression," and come full circle with the insouciant charm of the trumpeter's "Booker's Waltz" (for that matter, no out-of-tune piano has ever been as artfully exploited as by Waldron

and Blackwell's inspired rhythmic interplay on the latter tune). Unfortunately, a fair-sized chunk of Dolphy's Prestige recordings find him mismatched with bands ranging from the Latin Jazz Quartet to the workmanlike Danish section on the late '61 concert dates. Even the '63 quartet with Davis, trumpeter Edward Armstrong, and drummer J. C. Moses didn't convey the full spectrum of Dolphy's art (one of Dolphy's most provocative solos on *Vintage Dolphy* is an earthy take on "Donna Lee" with a larger all-star ensemble). Had there been nine discs of the Five Spot quintet available during his lifetime, Dolphy's multi-faceted art would have been far better understood decades ago.

—Bill Shoemaker

BEFORE & AFTER, *continued from page 118*

order, a real thought process. He almost knows too much music for this style. He's playing changes. Sounds like "Sometimes I'm Happy," almost. Billy Higgins?

**AFTER** Boy, I haven't seen Henry in years. He was one of those early, Mingus-influenced players, who, when he had a great night, it would really be a great night. You could hear the development and the ideas, and he could really lead a band down the

path. But if he didn't have a great night, it really wasn't a great night. There would be no cohesiveness and he wouldn't be able to help the band do whatever they were looking for. Henry had an emotional breakdown; that's why he left New York. I occasionally see someone from Philadelphia, which is where he's from, but they've been unable to give me any information about whether he's alive or dead, or what happened to him. He's probably the foremost Charlie Mingus-influenced bass player. H

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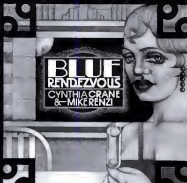
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SCREEN TEST, continued from page 58

the musical and human spirit of the legendary jazzman in a documentary that promises to stand as an exemplar of the genre. Carter's warmth and dignity shine, whether getting ready for a gig, mentoring a class of aspiring players, or reminiscing about trumpeter Bubber Miley, an early and important influence. Assembling vintage film clips, newspaper headlines and other Carter memorabilia, as well as interviews with Leonard Feather, Lena Horne, Quincy Jones, Dizzy Gillespie, André Previn, Ella Fitzgerald, David Sanborn, Clark Terry and Carter himself, Engle takes us on a memorable journey through America's classical music.

Along the way, there are stop-overs at Small's Paradise, the Savoy Ballroom, the broadcast studios of the BBC in London and the Apollo Theater. There are excerpts from Carter cameos in Hollywood fare such as *Thousands Cheer*, *Reveille with Beverly* and *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*. And, there are telling samples of Carter's urbane alto and thoughtful trumpet. A particularly poignant moment arises in a discussion of Hollywood's representations of jazz. Expressing disdain for big screen clichés linking jazz with drugs, Carter

asks plaintively, "Will there ever be a movie like *The Glenn Miller Story* featuring a black?" If Spike Lee or Clint Eastwood is reading, it's clear there couldn't be a more apt subject for such a film than Carter himself.

Another huge asset for Engle's project is a pointed and economic script by Theodore Strauss. As read by Burt Lancaster, it clarifies and focuses Carter's saga with befitting grace and restraint. In all, it's a triumph for the director-producer and his "star," the venerable Benny Carter.

—Chuck Berg ■

LABEL WATCH, continued from page 60

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—Jeff Kalis ■

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MOFFETT, continued from page 40

delay, reverb—just certain effects that I've kind of worked out over the last four or five years that I've been developing that effect. It was kind of a take-off for me, taking the instrument out of its normal position and flying with it, kind of traveling around the world with it," he enthused.

"There's a lot of Jimi Hendrix influence on *Planet Home*. Although I'm also playing the piccolo electric bass, there's also other influences of more traditional jazz artists, but I wanted to get more of a voice and more of an energy that would come across than something that would be standard form; what I saw [the UFO] was not standard form," he chuckled. "I'm interested in developing a voice for all three instruments, electric piccolo bass, acoustic bass, and fretless electric bass, so you don't have to ask whether he's playing a certain instrument. I would like to get to a point where you could recognize, 'Oh, that's Charnett playing.' That's my main concern." ☎

**CHARNETT'S GEAR:** Charnett's fretless electric bass and piccolo electric bass are both Moan Bases made by Fumi Nawawa

(Japan). His acoustic bass is a 1959 Pullman Bass (Germany). ☐

WOOTEN, continued from page 44

Victor says his own biggest challenge on *A Show Of Hands* was putting together the jazz medley. With typically flawless technique and a vivid imagination, he puts a fresh spin on the well-worn themes "Some Day My Prince Will Come," "Misty," "A Night in Tunisia" all seamlessly segued to a straight 12-bar "Blues."

"To keep the chords and melody going over those kinds of changes is harder for me to do," he admits. "It requires more of a Stanley Jordan technique. And I'm not that equipped yet."

This bass monster is being too modest. ☎

**VICTOR WOOTEN GEARBOX:** Victor Wooten recorded *A Show Of Hands* on a 4-string Fodera bass. For the title track and "Mare Lave" he converted a second 4-string instrument to a tenor bass by tuning it a fourth higher than the conventional range (ADGC), an idea he says he got from another bass hero, Stanley Clarke. ☐

## JOE PASS IN CONCERT



Joe Pass was the consummate jazz improviser, sometimes called 'the Art Tatum of the guitar' for his ability to combine dazzling virtuosity with impeccable taste and boundless harmonic invention. This video presents Joe Pass in a 1991 solo concert at Christ College, Brecon, Wales playing what he called "songs from our American Heritage." Titles include: *Somewhere, It Ain't Necessarily So, They Can't Take That Away From Mr. That's Earl Brother, All The Things You Are* and *Joe's Blues*. VESTAPAC 13009 \$24.95

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